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INDIA'S LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY

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Chief Editor :

Prof. I.V.CHALAPATI RAO

Vol. 74
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AN ANNOUNCEMENT

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I, Y. Sreedhar Murthy, do hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Y. Sreedhar Murthy
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Sri P.V.NARASIMHA RAO, Former Prime Minister
with Chief Editor
Prof. I.V.CHALAPATHI RAO

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(1908 - 2005)

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Madurai (T.N.)

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Yadagirigutta, (Andhra Pradesh.)

This issue of Triveni
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is dedicated to the memory of
Late Sri P.V.Narsimha Rao, a Man of Letters

TRIPLE STREAM

P.V. – A UNIQUE HUMAN BEING

I.V.Chalapati Rao

When Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao assumed the reins of office in 1991 as Prime Minister of India in extraordinary circumstances, sour sacks and doomsters prophesied that the minority government would not last even for six months. It was a miracle of miracles when he successfully steered the ship of state for the full term of five years by means of his strategic thinking and political acumen. He brought unusual talents to the management of power. At a time when Congress was in distress and doldrums being unable to face the united opposition, he gave it a face lift and a boost to its bruised morale. The way he dealt with the Speaker's election and the election of the President and the Vice-President is a proof of his diplomatic prowess. All attempts to dislodge his government were defeated.

P.V. realised that it was time to think outside the quasi socialism's tattered box. He was the morning star of economic reforms. India marched ahead under his dedicated leadership at a critical time in its history. His major achievements include a paradigm change in the economic policy, devolution of power to the people by making the Panchayat Raj and Nagarpalika Schemes as Law, ending decade-long insurgency and restoration of peace in the troubled states of Punjab and Assam, weaponisation and "operationalisation" of the nuclear policy, his initiatives on China, remarkable increase in the public stocks of food grains and above all the fabulous economic growth.

In 1991 our economy had sunk to the lowest level of 1.96, within one year it soared to 4.31 and soon rocketed to 5.7. Unimaginable acceleration indeed! The country which collapsed into economic morass made a spectacular recovery thanks to P.V's bold and

risk-taking reversal of the old economic policy and ushering in of the new-age reforms of liberalisation, globalisation and deregulation. Besides, he had to deal with a polity left divided by the politics of Mandal and Mandir. 18.36 metric tonnes of gold worth Rs. 2,208 crore rupees sold by the previous government was repurchased and brought back. A further 46.91 tonnes of R.B.I's gold mortgaged by the previous government in dire distress, was brought back. What more could be done by a patriotic Prime Minister to rehabilitate the country in economic growth and restore the country's pride and prestige in the comity of nations? Foreign Exchange reserves rose to an all-time record. Manufacturing sector and capital goods sector grew at an unprecedented rate. The succeeding Governments have followed the economic policy of liberalisation and globalisation which was pioneered by P.V. His choice of Manmohan Singh as Finance Minister was itself evidence of his leadership qualities in finding the right man for the right job.

P.V. was a seasoned administrator, an eminent educationist, a far-sighted statesman, a multi-lingual scholar, an outstanding writer, a connoisseur of fine arts, a persuasive public speaker and above all a unique human being. He was an ardent patriot, a staunch Gandhian and a champion of land reforms. His consensual style, facade of detachment, unflustered nature, calculated adoption of 'inaction' and the art of salutary delay in decision making were his well known techniques in management. Though he was an effective public speaker, he spoke less and listened more. He was a visionary with a passion for literature. Like Jawaharlal he gave to Indian politics a touch of Philosophy. He had the foresight to upgrade India's diplomatic

representation in Israel to full level of Ambassador. He was deeply interested in the fields of science and technology with world-wide proficiency in the use of computers.

Above all he was a STITHAPRAJNA, a title conferred on him at a mammoth public meeting in the presence of the three Chief Ministers of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in connection with the centenary celebrations of Swami Ramanand Tirth at Hyderabad.

Like the famed Duke of Wellington "he stood four square to all the winds that blew, and sought but duty's iron crown" and proved that "the path of duty is the way to glory". In the words of Sir Walter Scott:

*"Now is the stately column broke
The beacon light is quenched in smoke
The trumpet's silver sound is still
The Warden silent on the hill."*



PV ON TRIVENI*

"I always remember Triveni because in my formative years, it had a decisive effect on my thinking and instilled the spirit of patriotism more than any other journal or periodical"

P. V. Narsimha Rao

(From a letter to The Editor, Triveni)

After having lost touch with Prof. Chalapati Rao, one fine afternoon I think, he surfaced with a copy of Triveni. In those days, Triveni was something which was our staplefood. I have said this many times during our younger days - we were fed on it like mother's milk. I was overjoyed to find that Triveni had not closed. So I could say that persons of my generation are grateful to Prof. Chalapati Rao for having continued it. We should all put our heads together and see that Triveni attains its glory. He is holding it with great courage, determination but then it is too much to do for one individual. He is also getting on years. But, Triveni should never, never stop.

We had Ramanand Chatterjee's Modern Review, not many people must have heard about it. The spirit of nationalism was nurtured by some magazines in India - Bharathi, Triveni. Out of them only Triveni survives and some how we do not have vehicles of culture being read, being published, being used in the numbers in which India deserves it. No, they are not there. There are a lot of publications but publications like the Triveni have to be multiplied to a very large extent. There is some distortion in the minds of the younger generation today. They are very good, very bright, absolutely top class in their studies and intellect but there is something that needs to be felt indepth and that comes from Triveni and that came from Ramanand Chatterjee's Modern Review. That is what is lacking now.

** Excerpts from the speech delivered on 2nd October, 2002 during the release of the book Art of Living authored by Prof.I.V.Chalapathi Rao, published by Sri Yabaluri Raghavaiah Memorial Trust.*

MY ASSOCIATION WITH P.V.

I.V.Chalapathi Rao

I followed P.V.'s rising career from the beginnings in Karimnagar to his glorious record as India's first Prime Minister outside the Nehru family successfully completing the full period of five years in office. I am proud to say that I was honoured by him once in Hyderabad during his first visit as Prime Minister, and a second time in Delhi when he released the two parts of my translation of Tanguturi Prakasham's Autobiography into English and he presented his book "*INSIDER*" with the words written on it: "*To my respected friend Sri I.V.Chalapathi Rao*". As I was closely associated with him in the early days, I watched his career with an admiration bordering on pride. However as many writers have written about his achievements as Prime Minister, I would like to confine myself to his close association with me.

The great Godavary which later becomes one of the broadest rivers in the world, is just a channel at Nasik, the place of its genesis. The mighty oak tree with its innumerable branches was a tiny acorn in its origin. Likewise, the future Prime Minister of India had started as an MLA in Karimnagar District.

In 1961 I was Principal of Sri Raja Rajeswari Government College of Karimnagar, the district headquarters. Originally, it was started as a private college. It was started with the initiative of Late Sri Burugula Rama Krishna Rao, Chief Minister. Sri J. Tukka Rao and Sri P.V.Narasimha Rao were the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Governing Body. The committee appointed well-known scholars as Principals and Lecturers. To make it financially stable, later on the college was handed over to Government at the instance of Sri P.V. and other local leaders.

Kavi Samrat Viswanadha Sathyanarayana was the last Principal of the

private management from whom I took over as the first Principal when it became a Government College. As a man of letters P.V. frequently interacted with him and later translated his '*Veyi Padagalu*' into Hindi as '*Sahasra Phani*'. For this book P.V. received a prestigious award from the Sahitya Academy of Delhi. Later on he felt extremely happy when Gyana Peeth Award was received by Viswanadha. Speaking to the press persons Viswanadha humorously said: "*I received the award because of Dr. Gopala Reddy and Sri P.V.Narasimha Rao*".

When the Annual Day of the college had to be celebrated, in consultation with my colleague Sri V.Kondal Rao, I invited Sri P.V.Narasimha Rao as Chief Guest and Andhra Pitamaha Late Sri Madapati Hanmantha Rao, Chairman of the Legislative Council, as President of the meeting. Sri P.V. was not only M.L.A. but also a member of the Syndicate of the Osmania University. It was a memorable day. P.V. delivered a scholarly and stimulating address. It was in 1962

When he became Minister of Information and Publicity, it was a critical time when the Chinese invaded India. P.V. toured all the districts mobilizing public opinion, arousing the patriotism of the people and collecting money for the Defence Fund. He got me appointed by Government as Secretary of the People's Defence Committee for Karimnagar District. I accompanied him on his tour of the district where ever he went. He also asked me to address the meetings. I had the opportunity of listening to his eloquence in Telugu, Urdu and English. To my surprise, I found that he could stir the patriotic feelings of the educated as well as the illiterate. It was a matter of credit to him that Andhra Pradesh, especially Karimnagar district, contributed a substantial amount to the Defence Fund.

Then P.V. became Health Minister. Again he took steps to strengthen the Government Hospital of Karimnagar and Primary Health Centres in rural areas. He paid top priority attention to Family Planning, because he used to say that unchecked population explosion was the chief contributory cause to India's economic backwardness. Contrary to general opinion, he had a fine sense of humour. Once when the Department of Health and Medical Services held a public meeting in Karimnagar he was the chief guest and I presided. He made a humorous remark by saying, "Today you selected the right people for this meeting. Chalapati Rao is an example for family planning as he has only one son and I am a deterrent case as the father of eight children!"

At P.V.'s instance an Eye Camp was conducted in the newly completed building of S.R.R. Government College in which eight hundred eye operations were performed by Dr. P.Siva Reddy, Superintendent of Sarojini Devi Eye Hospital and his team of Ophthalmic surgeons. Spectacles were freely supplied to the operated patients. On the last day, a public meeting was held at which P.V. was the chief guest and I was the guest of honour. In fact P.V. was instrumental in getting the permanent buildings sanctioned by the Government. Even today the buildings of S.R.R. Government College are considered to be the best planned buildings in a spacious site not far from the town. He was responsible for Jagtial College being taken over by Government. It developed fast with Sri V.Kondal Rao as Principal. As Sri P.V. was busy in Delhi, I had the opportunity of opening it, Late Sri J.Chokka Rao presiding. As Law Minister P.V. sanctioned a new building to the District Court of Karimnagar and got it inaugurated by the Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh. He started the innovation of open Jails.

Soon P.V. became Education Minister of Andhra Pradesh. I was posted as Dy. Director of Public Instruction and later as Dy. Director of Higher

Education when the Department was bifurcated. As the one and only Dy. Director, I had the opportunity of assisting Sri B. Pratap Reddy, Director and later Late Sri M.V. Rajagopal, Special Secretary. P.V. introduced reforms of far reaching importance in Andhra Pradesh and they were used as models for the reforms introduced by him at national level when he was Union Minister for H.R.D. at the Centre. The present day U.G.C. Academic Staff Colleges, Navodaya Schools and Autonomous Colleges are some of his innovative measures.

As Editor of 'Triveni', the 75 years old Literary and Cultural quarterly, I am grateful to him for his moral support. He said "What little patriotism and political consciousness I have today were derived after reading the issues of Triveni of those days. I am glad you are editing it".

Recently there were only two public meetings when I was associated with him and heard him speak. The first was when he released one of my latest books 'Culture Capsules - Art of Living' in the Nizam College. The other one was when he released Smt. Vasa Prabhavathy's book in Raj Bhavan. He was Chief guest and I was the guest of honour.

I never forget the compliment paid to me when he released my book 'Art of Living'. He said "I am very happy on this auspicious day (Gandhi Jayanthi) to be able to meet all of you and also release Prof. Chalapati Rao's book. This book is not just a book. It is a treasure. We have had many kinds of treasures but this is a special treasure... I am really impressed by the manner in which he has brought some extraordinary things from thought to thought throughout, and he excelled".

"Prof. Chalapati Rao has a unique and many splendoured personality with whom I had a long association. Chalapati Raoji is an educationist, a fine teacher and an educational administrator, more than any of these things, he is a thinking person". I can only pray to God to deserve his opinion. □

THE PAST IS GONE, THE PRESENT IS NON-EXISTENT; SO, WE WORK FOR THE FUTURE ONLY!

Dr. I. Achyuta Rao

Introduction

In this article the author introduces a controversial/revolutionary concept that "*THE PRESENT*" practically does not exist and we should seriously consider only "*THE PAST*" and "*THE FUTURE*" for our well being. The philosophy of working for the future is not new, but age-old. It is universal, applicable to all living beings. The whole *EVOLUTION* is based on that.

A wise-woman said

THE PAST is infinitely long
and absolutely incorrigible,
THE PRESENT is infinitesimally short
and mostly negligible,
THE FUTURE is again infinitely long
yet slightly controllable;
We should, therefore, work for
the good of *ALL* in future.

'*ALL*' means all living beings in the Biosphere.

Based on his systematic analysis of the preachings of all religions, the author has found their essence to be

HELPA
HARMNONE (in SPACE DOMAIN)

On his serious discussion with his elder brother, he was told that Sri Sathya Saibaba also preaches the same, as

HELP EVER
HURT NEVER (in TIME DOMAIN)

Let us now study the details of the concept.

The Past

Scientifically or logically speaking, "*THE PAST*" is very well defined-as, whatever that had happened prior to the present "*MOMENT*". It may be a few days or months

back. It may be a few years back ! It could be even a few hundred or thousand years ago. If you stretch further, it could be a few million or billion years ago !

The Future

In the same way, "*THE FUTURE*" is very clearly defined as, whatever that would happen later to the present "*MOMENT*". It may be a few days or months hence. It may be a few years later ! It could be even a few hundred or thousand years later. If you stretch further, it could be a few million or billion years later!

The Present

No one has categorically defined what is meant by "*THE PRESENT*" ! Is it the present "*MOMENT*"? If so, it is literally "momentary" and has no width in time domain. So "*THE PRESENT*" has no existence at all !

Does it have a finite width, a few seconds, or minutes on either side of the present "*MOMENT*" ? Even if so, practically it has no existence in the domain of time. It is subjective and purely imaginary ! Even if the duration is as few months or years the situation remains the same in practice, compared to the huge time-domain !

Contrary to this, all philosophers, ancient or modern, give full importance to "*THE PRESENT*" only. In Hindu religion, especially in *GITA*, it is said "we do not know what (and where) we were before our birth. We do not know what (and where) we would be after our death". Similar expressions are found in some other religions also.

Does it mean that "*THE PRESENT*" is the human life-span? If so, whose? Is it too

long?! No! the saints say, and we also believe, that our life is too short like that of a water bubble ! Animals, birds, fish etc. have a much shorter life span. Insects and worms have still shorter life span ! In that case what is "the present" for them ?

Quite justifiably "*THE PAST*" is ignored by materialists as it had already gone for good. "*THE FUTURE*" is also ignored on the pretext of its being unknown and uncertain. That leaves only "*THE PRESENT*" to be dealt with and dwelt upon!! Much is said and written about "*THE PRESENT*". All stress is given, even by philosophers, on "*THE PRESENT*" only, because *IT ONLY IS VISIBLE*.

All of us know the spread of Electromagnetic radiation (Spectrum). In that huge spread, the part visible to the human eye is practically negligible ! The visible region for different animals, birds and other creatures is slightly different in the limits. But essentially, the visible region is practically negligible compared to the whole spread of radiation. A lot of instrumentation and a great deal of investigations are required to understand and make use of the huge non-visible part. Similar is the case with "*THE PAST*" and "*THE FUTURE*".

Author's View Point

If you analyse scientifically, "*THE PRESENT*" is transient, so unimportant. It is like a flash. The moment you say something or take some action, you are going into "*THE PAST*" ! Our actions, are guided by our "*PAST EXPERIENCE*" with a view to improving our "*FUTURE EXISTENCE*". This philosophy is applicable not only to human beings but also to all other living beings.

"*THE PAST*" and "*THE FUTURE*" are

infinitely long but well connected by *CAUSE AND EFFECT* relationship. Cause (or action) takes some finite time. The effect also would take sometime. It could be a long time also before the effect is felt or noticed. The effect may last long until it is disturbed by another cause. The transition from "*THE PAST*" to "*THE FUTURE*" is through "*THE PRESENT*" which is infinitesimally short.

A poet said, "In this dynamic world, we have to run fast to remain where we are". It is like stepping on a conveyor belt or escalator, *REAL ELEVATOR* ! That is the philosophy we have to follow for our well-being in future. We have to work for our future ! not the present ! ! When we drive a car we always have a forward look rather than at the present position.

Typical examples in nature

Working for Future

- i) Ants and honeybees store food for future
- ii) Birds build their nest before laying eggs
- iii) Fish reach the shores for laying eggs
- iv) Wild animals reach caves and tree-shelters well before reproduction
- v) All living beings prepare defence mechanisms well before their enemy attacks.
- vi) Animals and birds migrate to distant places for food and comfort, much in advance of adverse conditions.
- vii) Our own and our ancestors, "*Past experience*" helps us in working for a better future.
- viii) The adverse effects of Stratospheric Ozone layer depletion would be felt 80 to 100 years after the cause. Viz. Release of fluorocarbons etc. Advance actions should be taken for avoiding future catastrophes.
- ix) Melting of Arctic Snow would affect the world after several decades. Corrections are required in advance.
- x) Typical human examples are innumerable.

KRISHNA, THE FIRST COMMUNIST

Courtesy – Sunday Express

Long before Karl Marx, Lenin and Mao a historical figure in India fought against oppression, championed the cause of the poor, denounced religious dogma and empty ritualism, and sought to inspire a righteous and selfless attitude in society.

The basic tenets of communism say that all are equal, and exploiters and oppressors should be severely punished. It rebels against societal dogmas and advocates caring and sharing. The goal is to create a society free from selfishness, autocracy, aristocracy and oppression of people of any sort.

The life and message of Krishna reveals that he imbibed, thought and fought for these principles 5,230 years ago. In fact, an objective analysis of the Bhagavad Gita too would reveal that Krishna was a better communist than Karl Marx. One could go so far as to describe him as the real founder of communism!

Krishna grew up among cowherds—who today could be referred to as OBCs. A cowherd himself, he worked for the empowerment of his people. Later, he killed his own uncle, Kamsa, a king who was an oppressor, thereby liberating the entire society of Mathura and Brindavan from his tyranny.

Throughout his life, Krishna cared for the poor and the weak. In the Mahabharata war, he could have sided with the powerful Kauravas but he took the side of Pandavas, who had nothing on their side except goodwill and pure hearts. He worked for them and went as an ambassador for peace for them. So definitely, his mission was with the poor and the oppressed, the victims of royal aristocrat families and therefore he is called Deenabhandu, Deenavatsala (friend of the poor).

The story of Sudama, the poor Brahmin, is a well-known episode from Krishna's life. Often people think Brahmins were oppressors, when in

fact Brahmins have always been very poor. One never hears instances or stories of rich Brahmins in history or in the puranas. But Krishna's love and compassion was such that he honoured him, cutting across the class barriers.

Krishna also rebelled against dogmatic religious practices of those days. Even today it is well-known that the entire society stopped the sacrificial puja they were doing to Indra, shifting over, on Krishna's advice, to caring for the cows (Govardhan Pooja) and honouring the knowledge of the self. (Govardhan also means honouring knowledge). He also promoted Annakoot, where there is food for everybody.

Krishna rebels against the people who always argued in the name of Vedas. He has said that people who are driven by little desires, who are propitiating this deity or that, caught up in small rituals and greed, are fools (moodha). He also says, "Those who worship many devas and perform many rituals are of lesser intelligence".

Finally, after a detailed exposition of all aspects of life, knowledge and duty, he says "Sarva dharman Parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja" (drop all the dharmas and take refuge in me, i.e. in the higher self). This is really a revolutionary thing. Karl Marx also wanted people to drop religion, "Religion is the opium of the masses". But beyond religion is the quest for truth. Where does a man go further? There Krishna leads Arjuna, leads the people into that spiritual realm of experience, which is seriously lacking in communism today.

To transcend religion, one needs to understand religion. Karl Marx was not aware of Indian spirituality. All that he saw was the blind faith and the authoritarian rule of the religious

institutions that existed at that time in Russia, whereas Krishna takes us beyond religion.

He also says drop religion, but it brings you to a place of spiritual awakening, of knowledge, of truth, of beauty. The confidence that builds up in a person who knows the depth and the secrets of creation is something amazing, so beautiful – without which life is dry. So make the transition from religion to spirituality. That was what was missing in the Karl Marx principle and which Krishna has very clearly demonstrated and given to the world in the form of Gita.

Communism cannot reject Krishna at any cost because he stands for all its principles in a much more meaningful manner. If we don't see the reality, the truth with an open mind, then we have merely replaced an old religion with a new religion called communism. So we have to be aware and wake up to adapt to changing times.

I wonder why the communists have not yet owned Krishna. Many times in the Gita, Krishna says, “Yo mam pasyathi sarvatra” (One who sees me in everybody, is the one who sees the truth). This is the basic principle of communism – see everyone as yourself. He says the banana peel has a meaning as long as there is a banana inside. But when you eat the banana, then the peel has no value. Similarly, religion can't take people to the final truth, final goal.

But it is the spirit of self-enquiry, the scientific temper in a person, that takes one deeper. Religion stays behind and one moves into a realm of pure humanism or pure divinity – this is the hallmark of Krishna's teaching.

Unlike in the west, where scientists were tortured and questioning of the religious scriptures was prohibited, India has always encouraged questioning and contemplation. In fact, most of the scriptures in India are in the format of questions and answers. After putting forth his opinion, Krishna tells Arjuna to independently

think and question, and tells him that he has the freedom to accept or reject his opinion. He never imposes his idea.

Though communism advocates rational thinking, we hear many communists do not give the freedom to people to express a different ideology. At the same time, Krishna also inspired Arjuna to fight and not accept oppression, which again is what communists say. He advises Arjuna to fight not with anger or hatred, but with intelligence, with equanimity, with wisdom.

Another principle of communism is sharing. As a small child, Krishna would share the butter with all the boys, all the youngsters. Later he shared wealth. In the Srimad Bhagavatam, it said that in his last days Krishna used to go and give gifts to people every morning. A salient feature of communism is to work for the community and it comes down strongly on consumerism or greed. This is explained by Krishna in the Karma Yoga. Karmanyevadhikaraste.

Krishna goes on to say that one who is really wise regards all men as equal, and does not discriminate between a brahmin and an untouchable, or a learned one and someone who is not so learned, Vidyavinaya Sampanna.

Many people talk about communism but lead a capitalistic life. However, Krishna never did that. He stood for the cause of the poor. He saw that oneness in everybody and so he was remembered for centuries.

But nowadays it is suddenly fashionable to regard even the Ramayana and Mahabharata as epics and not as something that really happened. This is ridiculous, because a legend cannot have such an impact over the whole continent, and even beyond. The Ramayana and Mahabharata have made such an impact on civilization without any modern technology. The Sanskrit word itihasa means 'it happened like that/it happened thus'.

To see everyone as equal is a matter of the heart, and the heart can be made to blossom only through spirituality. And uplifting the spirit is what is spirituality. So you cannot be a true communist if you don't see them as yourself or part of yourself. What was missing in

communism is the very soul, that is spirituality, of which Krishna was an expert teacher.

Now communists in Kerala need not feel guilty about going to Guruvayoor and those in Bengal can openly participate in Durga Pooja. □

A GIRL CHILD

Prof. Hazara Singh

I am a girl child, an endangered gender
Hailed willy-nilly by some on my birth
As Lakshmi, legendary goddess of wealth
So often was disposed of after I was born
As priestly sermons kept presenting me
A mere piece of property, held as trust
Used to be married off early in childhood
To shift the onus of protection to others
Some parents did not mind even selling me
Or offered me to a temple to appease gods.

Progressive ideas and their gradual impact
Helped a lot to remove many a wicked bond
Right to equality revamped the lost dignity

Laws ensuring overall entitlement were made
Such equitable acts stirred the women power
But dowry demands and keen desire for sons
Diluted the effect of various welfare means
Earlier widows were burnt as customary rite
Now brides are burnt impelled by dowry greed
Even rigorous laws have failed to protect me.

Despite useful service science gives to man
It abets in denying me the right to be born
Earlier gender got known on being delivered
Now scanning tests show it even in the womb
Leading to my destruction long before birth. □

OH! CAT

Azhagunila

After swallowing the golden fish
which roams in your garden the yellow
cat's eyes
were torn by my
glass moons broken tile.
The fish are swimming
Its dream
it should not be
Oh God! Oh no!
Oh cat! □

RAINBOW AFTER

Rainbow after coming
earthquake after going
can see.
My house didn't even shake
and move.
Neem tree was just...
The leaves are just shaking
its too only yesterday
today wind too
absent. □

REMEMBERING BERTRAND RUSSELL

Dr. C. Jacob

The entire world knows that Bertrand Russell was one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century. He was born on 18-5-1872 in England. He is a great mathematician, a wonderful writer, a Jonathan Swift in satire, a renowned pacifist, a humanist beyond comparison and above all a great philosopher. In fact, he regretted when he was awarded Nobel Prize for literature, instead of for philosophy. Like Spinoza he wanted to liberate mankind from the tyranny of fear which arises out of ignorance. It is a fact beyond doubt that he succeeded in liberating countless number of people all over the world from ignorance, dogmas, superstitions, irrational beliefs, wrong notions and erroneous concepts of ethics, morality and sin. With his powerful pen and reasoning capacity he achieved his objectives.

In Russell's view social, economic and political inequalities are man-made evils and therefore those inequalities should be removed by man himself. His philosophy is "no one should learn how to obey and no one should attempt to command". He is a lover of peace. He condemned war. He emphasised the necessity of establishing world-government. He is the protagonist of happiness on earth in this life. His book "Conquest of Happiness" speaks of how to achieve happiness. How to be rational and scientific in thinking, his "Sceptical Essays" tell. How to educate children and create an ideal world, his book "On Education" teaches. How best we can enjoy married life, his "Marriage and Morals" guides us. As to how to develop philosophic outlook, his "History of Western Philosophy" and "My Philosophic Development" help. To liberate ourselves from the tyranny of fear, ignorance, misconceptions of life, erroneous beliefs, irrational concepts on men and matters and above all superstitions his "Unpopular Essays", "The Impact of Science on Society"

and "Why I am not a Christian" enlighten us. How to avoid overwork and fatigue and enjoy leisure, his book "In Praise of Idleness" announces. What man is and what man ought to be, his "Autobiography" reveals.

As Emerson put it "Every great man is an age, an era and a century requiring infinite time and space to fully accomplish his designs". Russell such is a great man who requires such time and space to get his ideas and views realised.

Though many of Russell's views were rejected by society in the beginning and though he was imprisoned twice and fined once and his book called "Human Society in Ethics and Politics" was proscribed for 50 years, in the end all his views and ideas were accepted with great fervour and gusto, and ultimately the society, as a measure of atonement, crowned him with the Nobel Prize.

Russell, we know, gives many new morals to mankind. He emphasises the need of love guided by knowledge and reason. He tells that conscience is not a mysterious thing because it is always in agreement with tribal custom and it is an outcome of evolution and education, and it is not uniform at all times and places and it cannot be accepted as a good guide for reason. About children he says that no child is born either good or bad, as the raw material of good and bad will be in neutral state in children, and the child takes that shape given by the parent. Like Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, he lays down that character is destiny and that the character of a country depends upon the character of its people. So, he is of the view that the foundation of character should be laid in children in their formative period.

About religion and God, Russell's, views are different. He is clear in his thought.

According to him, the idea of God, spirit, soul, eternity, heaven and hell, are the fruits of fertile imagination of the mind of man. Though society stamped Russell as an agnostic and an atheist and tried to suppress his views, it is universally acknowledged now that there is no other man like him who is so clear in his views and impartial in approaching every human problem. The opening lines of his autobiography speak of his intellectual eminence and profound knowledge and his unparalleled passion for humanism. To quote him, "Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search of knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the edge of despair".

As a homage to Russell let me recall here two samples of his intellectual eminence and profound knowledge and baffling wisdom.

About Communist Philosophy he observes:

Yehweh	=	Dialectical materialism
The Messiah	=	Marx.
The Elect	=	The Proletariat
The Church	=	The Communist Party
The Second Coming	=	The Revolution
Hell	=	Punishment of the Capitalists
The Millenium	=	The Communist Common Wealth

Now his Ten Commandments styled as

DECALOGUE:

1. Do not feel absolutely certain of anything.
2. Do not think it worthwhile to proceed by concealing evidence, for, the evidence is sure to come to light.

3. Never try to discourage thinking, for, you are sure to succeed.
4. When you meet with opposition, even if it be from your husband or your children, endeavour to overcome it by argument and not by authority, for a victory dependent on authority is unreal and illusory.
5. Have no respect for authority of others for there are always contrary authorities to be found.
6. Do not use power to suppress opinions you think pernicious, for if you do, the opinions will suppress you.
7. Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.
8. Find more pleasure in intelligent dissent than passive agreement, for, if you value intelligence as you should, the former implies a deeper agreement than the latter.
9. Be scrupulously truthful, even if the truth is inconvenient when you try to conceal it.
10. Do not feel envious of the happiness of those who live in fool's paradise, for, only a fool will think that it is happiness.

Before parting with the subject I add that Russell gave utmost importance to intellectual freedom. He was a sceptic. He never cared the public and never surrendered his freedom to anybody except to reason. He even proclaimed that he became a slave to reason. He did not mind divorcing his wives, one after the other, numbering three, when they became obstacles to his intellectual development. He is a circular saw and he left no deadwood of intellectual rubbish uncut and removed. At the same time his wit and humour and sarcasm send people to peals of laughter and make them forget themselves. He studied human mind as clearly as Shakesphere did. All hail to Earl Bertrand Russell.

Russell, you may remember, lived for full 98 years and died on 2-4-1970 with his life's aims fulfilled. □

MOBILE MANIA

T. Krishnan

The mobile telephone is probably no longer a status symbol, now that even a vegetable vendor on the street has one. But the obsessive manner in which the mobile phone is being constantly used everywhere makes one wonder if we have entered an addictive phase or even a manic phase. Let me recount my experience on mobile phone use in just one day, when I took a flight from Bangalore to Kolkata via Hyderabad.

In the forty-minute taxi drive to Bangalore airport, the driver received seven calls and made two calls himself on his mobile phone. Thus he was mostly driving with one hand and was most of the time talking with someone. When I objected to this and admonished him, he pointed out that in many cars rolling in the opposite direction the drivers were similarly engaged and who were, according to him, 'people like you'. I did not know what it exactly meant, but these were suited-booted 'gentlemen' presumably driving their own cars. I must say I was far from suited-booted myself! My expostulation that others violating the law does in no way give him the right to do so himself did not cut any ice with him.

Eventually, I reached the airport and checked in to my flight to Kolkata via Hyderabad. Of course, the lounge, the coffee shop, the bookshop, the passenger-holding bay, the bus taking passengers to the aircraft, etc. were full of passengers and others on their respective mobile phones. Mobile phone use continued even inside the aircraft. The stewardess announced that mobile phones had to be switched off once the aircraft doors closed. But this was largely ignored. My neighbour bound for Hyderabad was on his two mobile phones continually from the time I saw him sitting next to me. He was speaking very loudly in Telugu giving a running commentary on the flight preparations, talking about the frequent flyer miles he had accumulated, and such weighty matters which presumably could not wait for the

flight to land in Hyderabad. He stopped only when passengers sitting in front objected.

Even then he did not turn off either of the two mobile phones. He had them one in each hand right through the flight and even refused the offer of refreshments lest he had to let them out from his hands. His hands were itching and he was constantly playing with the keys, although he did not quite have the courage to actually dial someone. But right through the flight I could hear other mobile phones in the cabin ring and phone-like conversations taking place.

Eventually the announcement came that we were about to land in Hyderabad—about ten minutes before we actually touched down; again passengers were asked not to use mobile phones until after the doors opened. Now my neighbour started dialing and I could even hear a ring. I was upset and told him about the announcement; I explained in a combination of my limited Telugu and English that it will interfere with aircraft navigation and communication, and may even cause our aircraft and other aircraft to crash. He responded by saying that there would be no 'crash-vrash' since he was only calling from the left-hand phone to the right-hand phone; it would not interfere with anything since it would only go from here to there—he drew an arc from the left antenna to the right antenna to show the path the call would take!

Eventually I reached Kolkata, checked into a hotel and went to the coffee shop. At the table across from me were sitting three men, each with a mobile phone; in fact, one of them had two. Right through, they were calling various people and were talking what appeared to me to be nothing terribly earth-shaking or urgent. It was nearing midnight and now the numbers they dialed did not seem to respond. Soon they seemed to

have run out of numbers to dial and they were silent. For a while I diverted my attention elsewhere, but they started talking again. Something seemed peculiar and strange, and it took me a while to figure out what it was. They were talking to each other on their mobile phones! All three could participate since one of them had two phones!!

in meetings, music concerts and trains is an irritating experience and regular nuisance. It seems, in France theatres are allowed to install jamming equipment to stop all but emergency calls. People should not need a law to tell them to be courteous and avoid all public annoyance. Cultured people put their phones on vibrate alert or turn them off. Every one has a right to some peace and silence - Editor □

The inconsiderate use of mobile phones

THE MONSTER

K.M.Kale

Of your technological progress
O man, do not be so proud
And do not in its praise
Hysterically shout aloud.

You cannot swim like fish
And cannot fly like a bird
And even to walk on earth
You haven't truly learned.

So over other creatures
Do not your superiority claim
But, if possible, hang your head
Justifiably in utter shame.

For you've achieved progress
At the cost of dangerous pollution

And created many a problem
Which seem to have no solution.

All the creatures dread
Your terrible sight
And ere you approach
Take a trembling flight.

Even the stars shake
At your sinister approach
And the wind disgusted
Howls its painful reproach.

You are the greatest monster
The earth has ever known
For the seeds of its annihilation
You've very cruelly sown. □

A FOOL'S MESSAGE

K.V.Ramana Rao

("Abandon all learning, you will be free from trouble and distress" – Laotse)

This fool's raw stuff of ignorance is far safer
Than your barren husk of knowledge, ego polished,
Falstaffs and Bottoms are ever far far happier
With their "Plentiful lack of wit", so by Nature furnished.

Your Knowledge came along, life wept, from your Edens
Exiled, here you have discovered quasars and blackholes!
Your knowledge triumphed, brought weightier burdens,
Blasted your peace, dug deeper graves for your souls. □

SHELLEY AND KEATS FROM THE LOOKING GLASS OF 'ADONAI'S'

Manchikanti Krishnaiah

When 'the golden nest of singing birds', i.e. the Elizabethan period withered and coarse classic rules prevailed, to lift literature from the thorns of classic rules, the wave of Romanticism was revived. The glory of this age is in the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley. They all believed in the natural goodness of man, the idea that man in a state of nature would behave well. From this springs out the empathy. The young radical enthusiasts turned to poetry as naturally as a happy man to singing. To deviate from the practical, rough road of prose they took the rustic and grassy road of poetry. The later romantic poets namely Keats, Shelley, Byron, Moore, though were of the same goal, were on different paths. Prominent among them were Shelley and Keats.

Where Shelley finds optimism, prophecy, and a positivistic mood, Keats is in gloom. Though there is much contrast between these, Shelley was of the view that "Keats is one of the grand pillars of Romantic Mansion". To Keats, poetry is not at all "a criticism of life" but the very child of it. He loathed criticism of anything but sought the eternal beauty. When the bud of Keat's life was clipped by the reviewers, Shelley felt the pain, as a natural romantic and 'Adonais' came out as his 'tears'.

After the fashion of Greek Pastoral Elegies, Shelley mourns the untimely death of Adonais or Keats. He invokes the spirit of time and the whole earth to join the mourning. Urania, the mighty mother of all poetry, is also called upon to join the lament for the death of her youngest, most promising child so unexpectedly cut off in his prime.

Since the loss of the blind, old, lonely Milton, sire of an immortal strain, this is the saddest loss English poetry has had to bear.

It is given only to a few to rise to such eminence in poetry, those who try to do so are often struck by the envious wrath of man or "God". But, when an especially promising career, like that of Keats, is cut short so suddenly, lament is both natural and necessary. All this lamentation clearly shows the influence of the Greek models which Shelley was following. (Theocritus, Bion, Moschus).

Various Abstractions, like splendours, Adoration's desires and Winged personalities come to mourn the death of Adonais.

All things that he had loved in Nature also join the lament, Mourning, the pale of Ocean, the wild winds and even echo [Literature in particular "Poetry"]. Spring and Autumn and Nightingale join the band of mourners. The poet's personal grief for the death of Adonais is contrasted with the coming of spring in Italy. Spring comes back to life from year to year, but not to the dead. What is, then, the source of life and its goal? Shelley thus falls into spirituality that was brought upon him by the death of Keats.

Grief now becomes all the keener on this account and a fresh outburst of grief follows. Incidentally, Shelley laments the evil days on which poetry had fallen in his own times, in England. Urania's lament follows and she condemns the Reviewers whose hatred had brought it about. The Mountain shepherds, i.e., Byron, Leigh Hunt, Moore and lastly Shelley himself come to pay their last tribute to the dead. [A Phantom among men].

The vile Reviewer is again condemned for his crime. The pagan idea of death, which is the theme of the poem so far, is

now discarded in favour of the Pantheistic idea.

He is not dead, he lives. The Christian doctrine of personal survival after the death of the body is now subtly introduced. Keat's soul has now become an all-pervading influence for good throughout Nature. He is now a star and occupies a sphere like Chaucer, Chatterton, Sidney and Lucas, the inheritors of unfulfilled renown.

The Reviewer is finally asked to visit the Protestant Cemetery, where the remains of Keats were buried, and pay homage to the poet whom he had wronged.

All in all, Shelley thus glorifies the greatness of the Poet of Beauty, Keats, in his grief towards the irrecoverable loss.

□

SILENT MONSTER

P.V.Laxmi Prasad

Who am I? What am I? Where am I?
I am become a Name all thru,
The world's Endangered species.
You struggle to Feel my pulse
I am a Myth and a Misconception.
Faster I run than an Olympian,
Faster I spread than the Lord of Fire.
I transit, I transfuse & I Inject.

I am simple & Modest
Yet, complex at work
I frighten every citizen
Yet, No citizen frightens me in return.
NanoMicron as I exist,
I see the world in Macroform.
Kiss me Not, Touch me not,
Sweet Dreams carry Bitter Memories too.

I am the Bringer of
Things unattempted yet
In the age of computers.
Every hospital has a Label to tell,
But no Recipe to sell,
Don't Fall into my trap
I am the Monster of Monsters.

What is more dreadful
Than my presence in the world?
I laugh at you,
As I have laughed at you,
But Don't laugh at me.
Catching me Is catching "Silence"
Right, control your senses, Control myself.
Silent & unnoticed,
I lead the world on 1 December every year

DEAD GREENS

Pronab Kumar Majumder

Mere touch of human hands
Annihilate greens on earth
And dead greens treat humans
With deadly reprisals.
Man is half aware of it
Another half occupied by
Vainglorious march of possessions.

Trillion horses have been let loose
Blindly boisterously are they

Rushing trampling smashing
Architectures articulated by Man himself
Who not knowing are self-killers.

Who will calm and harness Man
To give a different vision of paradise
That could be raised on earth itself?
O God, would you intervene
Before all reduced to ashes nothingness?

□

SISTERS BUT STILL STRANGERS

A case for Comparative Dravidian Literary History

Dr. C. Mrunalini

The four main Dravidian literatures, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam are sister languages, but they have only nodding acquaintance with their sister literatures. It has been the practice in Comparative literature to compare regional literatures with foreign (read English) literatures rather than nearer home. There is a valid reason for this, because few of us are acquainted with languages or literatures of our neighbours.

While it is understandable that we cannot learn the many languages that prevail in a country like India, the avoidance of the problem rather than solving it, has been the greatest tragedy of the scholars of CL. Considerable work has been done in the field of Comparative Dravidian Linguistics, but the same cannot be said about Comparative Dravidian Literatures.

Prof. Sujit Mukherjee commented way back in his 1977 article "Towards a Literary History of India", "Granting separate but equal status to all the regional literatures of India throughout their growth and development results in a wholly distorted view of our total literary landscape. A just view may be obtained if we succeed in posting a concept of literary history for India which will allow us to see Indian literature steadily and see it whole". Here, Sujit Mukherjee may be calling out for a comparative Indian literature, but the same is true of Dravidian literatures. Subsequently Indian literature has found a messiah in Prof. Sisir Kumar Das, and it is time for Dravidian scholars to bring out a Comparative Dravidian Literary History.

The Sahitya Akademi has faithfully published literary histories for all the four major Dravidian languages separately, and one combined literary history (Dakshina Bhasha Sahityamulu) but the

latter again deals with the four literatures separately and not in an integrated manner.

Once we come to a consensus about the necessity of a Dravidian Literary History, the question of methodology for the same gains prominence.

Prof. V.N. Gokak has said that "The Modern Indian Literatures seem to have followed a distinct and a common line of development". He goes on to point out at least four stages through which the commonness can be traced. In the 1st stage, there is oral literature, in the 2nd, inscriptional literature, in the 3rd stage, finished works of art and in the 4th stage, poetics or prosody, which come only when a full-blooded literature is already in existence. This can serve as a starting point for the Comparative Dravidian Literary History. Among these four, the evidences now available suggest that Tamil emerged first in the 1st century A.D. itself, followed by Kannada in the 9th century, Telugu in 11th century and Malayalam in the 13th century.

The time gap notwithstanding, all the four literatures have exhibited similar characteristics in various respects. Simultaneous with the common features, all four have displayed immense originality in both genres and themes. Tamil had both kavyas and poetics (Tolkappium) as early as the beginning of the Chrisitan era. Kannada has had its Vachana Sahitya, Telugu its Dvipada and Sataka Sahitya while Malayalam its Manipravala.

But, in the final analysis, we can safely find many common features in these literatures, which can be grouped under the following heads:

1. Translations
2. Religious Movements in the medieval age
3. Social, Political and Literary movements in Modern age

4. Language Influences
5. Genres: borrowed from both Sanskrit and the West
6. Indigeneous Performing Arts.

1. Translations:

All the four literatures have relied heavily on translations. From the advent of their literatures upto the 19th century, it was from Sanskrit and from 19th century onwards from English. The interesting factor is that they have followed a similar pattern of translation; it was more or less trans-creation from Sanskrit. Especially, Ramayana, Mahabharatha and Mahablagavata have been translated into various genres in the Dravidian literatures. The Sanskrit originals have been re-created in the regional languages with additions, deletions and modifications. Pampa's Vikramarjuna Vijayam in Kannada, the Kavitraya's Mahabharata in Telugu, Kamba's Ramayana in Tamil and Cherusseri's Krishna gatha in Malayalam are some examples.

In modern ages, they have also translated the same texts again and again, thereby indicating that both the Dravidian writers and the readers shared the same literary taste in adapting Western literatures. For instance, Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian dramatist was translated repeatedly in Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. The same response is evident in the case of Maxim Gorky's Mother and Shakespeare's plays.

2. Religious Movements:

The Religious Movements, which affected the four Dravidian Literatures are Jainism, Buddhism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism. The resultant literature was called Bhakti Poetry, which had wide spread popularity in all the four regions and which produced some of the all time great poets in all the languages. As Prof.C.D.Narasimhaiah said, "It is to the lasting glory of Bhakti poets that where the seers and sages of the Vedas and the Upanishads and the poets of the Classical Age failed the Bhakti poet picked up works from the street and made memorable poetry out of it as if to exemplify the truth of the observation

that a poet is not a special kind of man but everyman is a special kind of poet". This can be extended to the disadvantaged sex, the woman too, because the only time women poets were mentioned in any literary history was when they wrote Bhakti poetry. For instance: Andal in Tamil, Akka mahadevi in Kannada and Molla in Telugu. In Telugu, women poets, especially in the 17th and 18th centuries also wrote erotic poetry, which were not given due recognition in the literary history, or even when given, condemned by the male literary historians.

The early Tamil literature shows the influences of Buddhism, while later the Nayanmars represented Shaivism and Alvars represented Vaishnavism. Religious movements in all the four regions inspired new genres, like Padakavitha in Telugu, Vachana sahitya in Kannada etc. The Kannada vachana had its reflection in Telugu Shavite literature too. Madhura Bhakti is a recurrent theme in all the Dravidian literatures, like Andal in Tamil, Akka mahadevi in Kannada and Tarigonda Venkamamba in Telugu.

3. Social, Political and Literary Movements:

The modern age saw a plethora of social, political and literary movements, mostly imported from the West and Bengal in India. The Social Reform movement, which emerged in Bengal in the first half of the 19th century had its followers in the Dravidian region. Similarly, Marxism, Romanticism, Nationalism, Cultural Renaissance are some of the political and literary ideologies which had similar responses in the Dravidian literatures. Gurajada Apparao in Telugu, Subrahmanya Bharathi in Tamil, Vallathol in Malayalam are some of the great Dravidian nationalist poets. Similarly, Marxism provoked poets like Sri Sri (Telugu), Kesava dev (Malayalam) and many others into churning out works on behalf of the oppressed class.

The cultural renaissance saw in the 3rd and 4th decades of the 20th century, the new genre called the Historical Novel, which is exemplified by the

Kannada writers like Galaganatha and Telugu writers like Viswanatha Satyanarayana. Romanticism, called Kalpanika Vadam in Telugu and Navodaya movement in Kannada produced great poets like Devulapalli Krishna Sastry in Telugu and Bendre and Puttappa in Kannada. These poets took the Lyric genre to great heights. Romantic movement in Malayalam was no less strong and it thrived with the poetry of Raja Ravi Verma, Asan, Vallatthol and Ulloor.

4. Linguistic Influences:

The influence of Sanskrit in ancient days and English in the modern age, with Persian-Arabic in between is common to all the four Dravidian languages. Among them, Telugu and Malayalam were and still are more close to Sanskrit because they chose to retain the influence of the language. Tamil outgrew Sanskrit long ago. The special genre Manipravalam created by Malayalam speaks volumes of the effect of one linguistic tradition on another. The influence of English is too obvious to justify repetition. On the other hand, all the four languages have been influenced by each other, which is a matter for discussion elsewhere. Both Sanskrit and English have influenced the Dravidian languages not only linguistically but also generically and thematically.

5. Genres:

Champu is the first genre that comes to our mind when we talk about similarity of genres in the Dravidian literatures. This genre, which combines poetry and prose has been found most suitable for both translations of the epics from Sanskrit as well as original kavyas in the regional languages. Malayalam, the most prolific user of this genre also adapted the Sandesha kavya from Sanskrit. The songs were perfected by the Tamil Bhakti poets even before they arrived in other Dravidian languages. The Purana, Mahakavya and Kavya are the few Sanskritic genres adapted by all these literatures. But, they do not use the names in a similar meaning; for

instance, in Malayalam Prabandha is used as the suffix for Ramayanam, Mahabharata etc., while in Telugu, Prabandha is itself a genre, which reigned supreme in the 16th and 17th centuries.

In the modern age, with the advent of English and Western genres, all the Dravidian literatures have adapted the Novel, Drama, Short Story, Essay, Autobiography, Blank verse etc., within a very short time. We can see parallels in the themes of these genres very often, especially if we look at them from the angle of movements. The emphasis may vary in the sense that the Kannada historical novel may be better (I am talking only about volume and the preference of the writers to one genre over the other, not about quality) than the Telugu one, or the Telugu Romantic novel better than the Tamil and Kannada novels; the Marxist short story could definitely be better in Malayalam, while the lyrical poetry may be more abundant in Telugu than in Tamil. But, the fact remains that these genres were introduced and improved upon by the talent and application of the individual writers, in each language roughly through the same period.

6. Performing Arts:

All the performing arts in these four regions had something to do with literature and are comparable too. The Kathakali of Kerala has gained a status of not just a performing art but it also has an important place in the History of the Malayalam Literature. Similarly, the principles of Bharata natyam, prevalent mostly in Tamilnadu and Karnataka, are adapted to all literary genres, like Kavyas and Prabandhas.

The Kuchipudi dance of Andhra Region has an important place in the Bhakti literature of Telugu with emphasis on Madhura Bhakti. The Yakshaganas of the Karnataka have been adapted by the Andhras and this dance form has been the basis for many later dance forms in both the regions.

The folk art forms of all the four regions have many common features. Their thematic unity and performance criteria are not only comparable but offer a large canvas to build an integrated Dravidian Folk Lore history.

Conclusion:

The above thoughts and concepts aim at emphasizing the need for an integrated approach to Dravidian literatures. A history of this kind would have the following results:

1. It will showcase the contribution of Dravidian literatures to Indian Literature as a whole.

2. It will, by comparisons within and without, give an idea as to where each literature stands in the panorama of Indian literature.

3. It will fill the gap that the researchers, interested in comparative Dravidian literature are facing at present.

4. Such a history can be translated into all the four Dravidian languages and Hindi to facilitate readers of all Indian and non-Indian languages.

The above mentioned points and suggestions are but a mere beginning. This is only to activate our minds towards this goal. There are many other concepts like myths, motifs, ideas and cultural facts that unite these four languages, which are not mentioned in this paper. Comparative Dravidian Literary History may later lead to comparative histories of other regions of India, so that they will be more comprehensive and detailed than the Histories of Indian Literature.

□

DANCING DEVIL

V. Rama Rao

In the Wee hours
On my morning walk
Near Rajghat
I heard somebody calling
Shanti!... Shanti!...
Turned Back
None!
Walked a while
Again Shanti! Shanti!...
Same known voice
It's Mahatma!
Wondering I asked him
Why are you calling Shanti? Bapu?...
Where is Shanti!? Oh! Mahatma?
That's why I am calling Shanti,
Bapu replied:

Wherever you see
Only bloodsheds

Dividing India, Splitting into pieces
In the name of racisms, religionisms
How do you expect peace for my
Athma?

Whenever delegates, Politicians
Put wreaths on my Samadhi
I'm feeling the floral pricks
Rather than fragrance
Hoping for united India
Thought future India'll be shining bright
My dreams haven't come true
That's why I'm crying for peace.

Poor Bapu!
Where is Shanti?...
It's "Ashanti!"
Now a dancing devil
On our Mahabharat

□

SARASWATHY RIVER

Dr. S.M.Naqvi

Aerial photographs and satellite inquiries indicate that the Thar desert formerly had a number of streams. The courses of three extinct streams are buried under the desert plain. For example, the extinct river Saraswathi, which has been documented in the ancient Indian literature, traversed through the desert and has been identified below the present dry bed from north to south. Its part has been identified in Pakistan also (Reference: Oldham 1893, Allchin et al., 1978; Ghose et al., 1979, Balkiwal and Grover 1988, Dhir et al. 1992).

SEM analysis of the quarternary sediments of the north-eastern sector of the desert indicates considerable glacial and fluvial transport of the sediments (Raghav 1991b). It

is believed that the survival of the Saraswathi and its tributaries such as Drishadvati courses depended mainly on the perennial supply of water from the Sutlez which was called the Satadru in vedik literature (See Dhir et al. 1992 page 39) which shifted its course several times in the sub-Himalayan plains, as a consequence of neo-tectonic movements (Valdiya 1989; Kar 1992a, Venkateswarlu et al 1990 and reference in Dhir et al. 1992)

These research findings confirm that Saraswathi river which forms Triveni Sangamam along with Ganga and Jamna at Allahabad did exist in history as authenticated above - Editor □

ODE TO TENDER BREATH

Dr. Raparla Janardhana Rao

Even with my forefathers you stayed
Entwined in my parents too
Descended into my life's temple, an abode
For you, tender soft and silent,
Breath! key of life, and all actions.

You made my initial cry, a journey's start
Commencing my life to my parent's joy
The long wait over, I was a tiny babe
Crying, sucking, puking, kicking, staring
You've made me, what I am.

Through a life of events passionate
Steered me, you, in the tempestuous phase

Learning, earning and forming family
In all strife and stress, you lived with me
Turned me into a father, and a father's father
Unfolding this life, enhancing the completion.

O Breath! These years you've been with me
But how it will be all when you depart
Will be just a ripe fruit's fall, normal
Or a struggle within, with your enemy
That snuffs the spark, with gloom all over
Or will you bring me a chariot ethereal
To lead me on the odyssey to a new world
Ere you depart me, realise me "Soham", "I
am that" □

INESCAPABLE GRACE: ENGLISH POETRY BY INDIANS

Dr. Prema Nandakumar

When we draw close to the wonderful, multifoliate creativity that is going in Indian literature today, poetry makes us stop for a moment with astonishment. The commitment and the faith of Indians writing poetry in English is sometimes deeply touching. For nearly one hundred and fifty years, Indian poets have been prolific and they have given us some of the finest flights of English poetry. Of course, imitators of Eliot and Pound, Sexton and Plath have been aplenty and they have even achieved success in terms of getting published abroad and gaining awards and finding themselves spread out in Indian anthologies and even syllabi. But even if Indians have chosen a foreign language like English, most of them have found it impossible to escape the magnet of Grace that is India's rich past. That is why a good deal of their poetry will stand the test of time. Unlike their tool, the English Language, their subject matter has a literature and culture several millennia old. Those who have allowed themselves to be blessed by this Grace have gained the needed strength to endure and carry the torch onward.

For, what is generally overlooked is the manner in which Indian culture has been reflected even in our earliest poets in English. Our first poets like Vivian Derozio and Swami Vivekananda expressed our historical sense and mythological symbols with a sense of undeniable power. Even a non-Indian could sense the sway of a hidden strength in a poem like 'Kali, the Mother' by Swami Vivekananda:

*"For Terror is Thy name,
Death is in Thy breath,
And every shaking step*

Destroys a world for e'er.

*Thou 'Time' the All-Destroyer!
Come, O Mother, come!*

Toru Dutt's *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* (1882) is now a classic. So is Romesh Chunder Dutt's *Lays of Ancient India* (1894). Manmohan Ghose, of course, preferred western themes (*Adam Alarmed in Paradise*, left incomplete) but his brother Sri Aurobindo drew from the *Mahabharata* to write narratives like *Love and Death* and the epic, *Savitri*. Sarojini Naidu recorded the sounds and sights of India with exquisite embroidery:

*Sweet is the shade of the coconut glade,
and the scent of the mango grove,
And sweet are the sands at the full 'o
the moon
with the sound of the voices we love.
But sweeter, O brothers, the kiss of the
spray
And the dance of the wild foam's glee:
Row, brothers, row to the blue of the verge,
Where the low sky mates with the sea.
(Coramandel Fishers)*

Just as the tapestry of the Indian poet in English was gaining richer shades and subtleties in the background of the greatest tradition in the world, some poets changed gear to get into the grove of the Eliotesque conundrums of "broken images". It was no doubt the call of the Time Spirit, and Indo-Anglian literature, perhaps, needed these inputs as well. India had become independent, and increasingly our young men were going to American Universities, and the exchange of printed material was speedier in a world growing

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smaller in distance. As one who was an undergraduate at this time, it was somewhat exciting to turn to the shorter, slicker and tantalizingly shocking poems. After all those lilies blooming on one's backyard in American poetry, it was a sand-paper feeling to have the ugly raised up as the poetically beautiful.

*Hernia, goiter and the flowering boil
Lie bare beneath his hands, forever bare.
His fingers touch the skin: they reach the
soul.*

*I know him in the morning for a seer.
(Dom Moraes, At Seven O'Clock)*

Also, the "confessional poetry" of some of these versifiers invited with a wicked gleam, especially if it was a poetess like Kamala Das or Gauri Deshpande:

*You dribbled spittle into my mouth, you
poured
Yourself into every nook and cranny, you
embalmed
My poor lust with your bitter-sweet juices.
You called me wife
I was taught to break saccharine into your
tea and
To offer at the right moment the vitamins.
Cowering
Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the
magic loaf and
Became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason,
to all your
Questions I mumbled incoherent replies.
The summer
Begins to pall.
(Kamala Das, The Old Playhouse)*

There was also the sand-paper daring of some poets who could desecrate with impunity terms and beliefs we had been holding in reverence, using a facile English style:

*We all paid the hook with the bait, Allah
downwards.*

*What is paradise, but a promissory note
Found in the holy book itself? And if you probe
Under the skin what does it promise us
For being humble and truthful, and turning
Towards Kaaba five times a day,
Weeping in Moharrum and fasting in
Ramadan?*

*What does it promise us except
That flea-ridden bags that we are
We will end up as splendid corpses?
(Keiki N. Daruwalla, Apothecary)*

With so much churning of a received tradition regarding prosody, themes and aesthesis, the English-educated Indian (specially of the academic areas) could flaunt a wonderful feeling: "I too can be a poet. No need to play an imaginary piano with my fingers counting the syllables and struggling to decide where to have the "compensatory pause" and weigh the words for a spondee or a dactyl. Enough of deciding whether wink will go with sink, stink or brink! Freedom from all prosodic shackles!"

Along with the externals of a poem, the subject-matter also was in for change. Keeping up with the tradition that what Bengal thinks today, the rest of the country practises tomorrow, the change was announced formally in Kolkata. The Writers Workshop of Prof. P. Lal took the lead and found the "spiritual poetry" of the Aurobindonian School (Nirodbaran, K.D. Sethna and others) not healthy enough for the growth of Indian poetry in English (*Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry*, 1959). In fact, Prof. Raghavendra Rao found eminent poets like Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo to be manipulators of the English language and not creators! Nor did they have any use for our rich tradition. However, their "cat on a hot tin roof" attitude did not go unquestioned and within a couple of years Prof. Lal (backed by many young writers like Anita Desai and Pradip Sen) issued a statement which said:

Sri Aurobindo happens to be our Milton, - and Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Manmohan Ghose and -Harindranath Chattopadhyaya our Romantic singing-birds. They provide sufficient provocation to -experiment afresh, set new standards, preserve what is vital in -the tradition and give a definition to the needs of the - present.

In the last forty years there has been plentiful experimentation and an amazing amount of poetic output in English in India. Prof. Lal's Writers Workshop has been in the forefront of giving a base for those who want to publish. It may be remembered that many poets like Vikram Seth originally published their work in Writers Workshop. The publishing house continues to be active. The "Bombay Group" (Nissim Ezekiel, for instance) has been very visible in anthologies. Orissa has enthusiastic poets publishing all the time, while Jayanta Mahapatra remains one of our best recorders of the Oriya land. South India has the untiring Krishna Srinivas and his monthly POET that has always tried to be international in its spread, while encouraging English poetry by Indians. There is then Karnataka (the Chetana group readily comes to mind) and Kerala (Gopi Krishna Kottoor's *Poetry Chain*).

Sitting in a room lined with rows and rows of such volumes, do I perceive any "trend" today? Indeed, it appears that Indian poetry in English has come full circle. The brief poem - no rhyme, no rhythm and often no reason either continues to be popular. Despite attractive titles, often we get lost in inchoate thought- processes:

*never low as my staying over here
that has no intrigue or song;
just a simple act of hinging upon
what one wishes to do across the shrunken
horizon.*

(Rabindra Swain, I Forget the First Line)

It appears that such free verse has at last begun to pall and a bit of rhythm and rhyme have been sneaking in with plentiful laughter. For instance, a seasoned academician like Prof. M.K.Naik has been publishing volumes of limericks and clerihevs. Tinier and tinier the form has grown in some hands, drawing upon the reservoir of Haiku and Tanka in Japan. Some lovers of poetry have tried to come back to prosodic poetry that has an explicit message or an internalized autobiographical recordation or a report of social concern. Indeed, Dr.H.Tulsi has even been bravely publishing a journal exclusively for structured verse in *Metverse Muse*. She has never failed to enthuse prospective poets as in this Spenserian Stanza:

*From 'Free Verse' freedom you have been
won at last;
Restored to you been your rightful throne.
Your darkened days have now become
your 'past';
To fresh attacks your fort is no more prone.
Your harp, henceforth, will never hoarsely
drone;
Repaired has been each broken string
and dent.
With rhythmic chimes to guide your dulcet
tone,
Your anklets new, with tinkling bells, are
meant.
So sing and dance away, to all our hearts'
content!
(To Tradpoesia),*

Of course there are wags around who always say that there are definitely more writers of poetry than readers in India, a point referred to wanly by the practitioners themselves:

*O Poet
How long will you too
Continue to arduously compose the poems
Despite knowing well and true this fact*

*That people have absolutely stopped
Reading now whatsoever the verses?*

(Suresh C.Jaryal, Inquest)

Anyway, this is a global phenomenon and the Indian poet need not feel disheartened. Unlike, his counterparts elsewhere, he has a very strong tradition to infuse him with new strength. Here it is also understood that the poet has an important place as the conscience-keeper of the society which is beset with a million problems. As J.P Das, the eminent Oriya poet says:

*It is true that life is getting more
prosaic and less poetic. It is true that
there is difficulty in finding publishers for
poetry. But no one has yet written off
poetry as a gone case, and though they
talk of the end of history and of
civilization, no one has suggested the end
of poetry. New poets are born and poetry
books are published every day.*²

The Indian poet writing in English has, of late, been tapping the ancient past with a rare finesse and in this manner he has kept the poetic spirit alive for he knows that a nation must keep its poetry vibrant to meet any contemporary situation.

*Poetry remains man's inalienable
birthright and paramount need.*

*Call it verify the voice of the soul
and the elan of the race.*

*It survives fashions and revolutions
in taste and social upsets..*

*Isn't a poet the brave intrepid diver
who explores life's ocean-depths?*

*Dying almost, he collects his findings
and shores up the oyster-pearls.*

*But the Rasika alone sees the pearl
to prize it, and thanks the poet.*

(K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar,

Microcosmographia Poetica)

The rasikas of this nation may be poor in monetary terms when it comes to buying books and periodicals, but they have never failed to read, encourage and salute the Indian poet. Now that the English poet is turning to sustained projections of themes, the poetry scene in English is becoming rich fast, both by original productions as well as beautiful works in translation. During the last quarter century, my shelf of English poetry has had plentiful inputs that are sublime, readable, thought provoking, meditative. One cannot say the poets always succeed; even among those who achieve signal success there may be patches of dryness. But then this is to be expected in long poems. As the situation is today, one can only say the Indian poetic voice in English is quite, quite vibrant.

Maha Nand Sharma has retold the tremendous life of Bhishma and has made use of the Shiva cycle of myths for his *Rudraksha Rosary*. His *Flowering of the Lotus* is about the colorful Sanskrit poet, Bartihari. Lakshmi Narayan Mahapatra has drawn upon Vedic images for *Bhuma*. C.S.Kamalapati's *The Song of Songs: The Song of the Seven Hills* intersects the legends about the pilgrim hill of Tirupati with innumerable contemporary adventures in spiritual spaces. Drawn deeper and deeper into the spaces of the spiraling legends, these poets do get caught occasionally in a whirl of words. It is a pardonable evil, though as Kamalapati would have it:

*The Rajayogi like the Ancient Mariner
Sometimes never stops, until he has fully
explained
All points relevant to the subject
concerned.*

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, an Aurobindonian himself, has sought a way out by controlling

2. A Poet Has to go Through Hells, Motif (May 31.2004) p.16

mythic effusiveness with his own prosodic structure of an unrhymed quatrain of 34 syllables (10-7-10-7) as "an English approximation to the Sanskrit anushtup." His *Sitayana*, *Sati Sapthakam* and *Krishna Geetam* retell ancient legends with a contemporaneous thrust, as when Sita is heard musing on the nuclear threat while she is in the Ashrama of Valmiki. S.M. Angadi's *Basava Darsana* is an amazingly sincere attempt to present the Basava phenomenon that gave Saivism a high pedestal and inspired the Vacana canon in Kannada language. Angadi's is a breathless narrative in epic proportions. There are passages that move us deeply as in the legend of Akka Mahadevi. Immersion in the past history and alertness to the present make Angadi's poetry meaningful. Thus Basavanna to his followers:

*Beggary and parasitism have been in our
country
Raised to dignified, nay, glorified status,
but they in fact,
Must be outlawed at once and ruthlessly
banished.
He who does not work for his bread has
no right
To eat. So everybody without exception
must work
According to his ability, in which case
there'll never be
Dearth, destitution, poverty and the like
left on earth.*

These poets give a creative and meaningful turn to the past in their English productions. Here is Amreeta Syam's Kaikeyi speaking to her grand children

*Ask
Ask questions, my grandchildren.
Always
Rule with your
Hearts
But keep a little
Of yourselves*

*Aside
For life
And laughter.*

Interestingly enough, the richest area in Indian literature in English translation is also bagged by poetry. Some of the finest English verses to come to us in recent times is through translations which are creative in their own right. An example is O.N.V. Kurup's *Ujjayini* which takes the received tradition regarding Kalidasa's life but modifies it with new insights drawn from his writings. Familiar scenes and phrases flit by, and when touching upon *Raghuvamsa* there is almost an echo of the passage from Ulloor quoted above, for the heroic ideal in India has remained alive all the time. Concluding his saga, Kalidasa wonders at this phenomenon with pardonable pride

*Where are the ones who wore
the sceptre and the crown, yet
diligently placed immortal reputation
above the stirrings of their mortal bodies
and knew what they gave as price for
preserving it unsullied and bright,
was the only real investment?
And where do the ones stand
Who sucked only the nectar of power?
As he finished writing that tragic saga,
From Dileep to Agnivarna,
The words of his guru long ago
Echoed in his soul, 'Your words
Would one day reach Ujjayini !*

A tremendous undertaking that has been enriching Indian poetry in English is Prof. P.Lal's verse-by-verse translation of the Mahabharata. The power of the Sanskrit verses composed several millennia earlier come now in the simple, crystalline English of P.Lal, trailing clouds of glory from the stately style of Vyasa. An occasional slipping in of a Sanskrit adjective or noun but helps the English rise in sublimity.

Like a musth-elephant

separated from his herd,
your maha-powerful son
Duryodhana advanced;
And the Pandavas broke
into loud exultation.

O raja ! Seeing Duryodhana,
Mace in hand,
Looking like the tall-peaked
Kailasa mountain,
Advancing
Bhima said.

Remember how Draupadi
In her period
Was insulted in the sabha,
And raja Yudhisthira
Was cheated at dice
By Sakuni ?

O wicked-atmaned Duryodhana!
Today you will taste
The Maha-bitter fruits
Of these and other crimes
You perpetrated against
The innocent Pandavas.
(Bhimasena - Duryodhana amveda, verses
40, 42-44)

Twentieth century Kannada literature has given K.V. Puttappa's (Kuvempu) *Ramayana Darshanam*. This has now been brought to English by the renowned English scholar and poet, Shankar Mokashi-Punekar. Reading Kuvempu in Kannada is a rare experience; and absorbing his thoughts in Dr. Shankar Mokashi Punekar's stately English leads us to a state of exaltation. Ah, the long poem is alive; the ancient myths are relevant still; the English language can convey the Indian experience as clearly as the waters of Sarayu in Valmiki's time!

Going through *Sri Ramayana Darshanam* slowly (the poem calls for frequent meditation) one comes across many thought-provoking changes. As when Rama

begs for Vali's pardon in a long passage:

Admitting irreparable wrong done is the
Of knight templars: but ha! My mind ^{mark}
Day and night by Sita's severance, ^{seething-hot}
And fuddled my thought. I chose devious ^{dimmed reflectors}
To quick finis. ^{pathways}

To the reader of *Shri Ramayana Darshanam*, there will never be a lack of such very interesting innovations. When did we ever hear of Rama proceeding to join Sita in the fire in Yuddha Kanda? A scene follows "as if the gateway of supersensuous was thrown open to the sensuous", and Rama is cleansed by the trial by fire. Divided into four Books (Ayodhya, Kishkinda, Lanka and Shree), the epic concludes with Rama's coronation described in terms of the glory and grandeur of Mother Nature. The epic opens with Kuvempu's salutations to world poets including Firdausi and Aurobindo, a passage that assures us that the poet in all climes and at all times has been the heart-beat of humanism:

Obeisance to poets.. to Homer, Vergil,
And Milton; to Kumaravyasa , to
Sage Vyasa, Bhasa, Bhavabhooti,
To Narahari, Tulasidasa, Krittivasa,
Nannaya, Firdousi, Kamba, sage
To ancients, moderns, elders and ^{Aurobindo.}
Regardless of time, land, language or ^{youngsters,}
I bow to one and all world Acharyas of ^{caste distinctions,}
Discerning God's glory wherever some ^{art,}

light shines
I bend my knees and fold my hands in
salutation.
May Guru's kindness abide; poet's mercy
prevail;
May the yearning heart of the world
crystallize
Into a blessing. Bend, heads; fold, hands;
life, be clean.
May Rasa penance triumph; may perennial
peace
Prevail.

Poetry is indeed a "Rasa penance", a tapasya, not to be lightly taken up. One should not squander away one's gifts in purposeless self-pity or elitist stargazing. The great Indian tradition as well as its folklore counterpart have always watched the sacred and the secular as a helix, each twining with the other and both enriching the country and the people, applying the needed correctives and inspiring people to exceed themselves in heroic ways. In India, the hero as a poet has been given the highest throne termed as the Kavi, the Dhrishta, and the Seer. Looking around the new wave of poets and translators, I do have a feeling that the day is not far off when Sri Aurobindo's

prophecy regarding the future poetry might come to true and the Mantric Word is heard in India. Caught as we are in this extremely complicated world, I would like to conclude with the solemn hope of George Santayana stated in *Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius. Dante and Goethe* (1935):

"It is time some genius appear to reconstitute the shattered picture of the world. He should live in the continual presence of all experience, and respect it; he should at the same time understand nature, the ground of that experience; and he- should also have a delicate sense of the ideal echoes of his own passions, for all the colours of his possible happiness. All that can inspire a poet is contained in this task, and nothing less than this task would exhaust a poet's Inspiration. We may hail this needed genius from afar... we may salute him, saying.

On or ate I' altissimo poeta.

Honour the most high poet, honour the highest possible poet."



POOR HUMAN RACE !

K. V. Ramana Rao

How long our world should go the warring way?
 In building a new world, would love have a say?
 Are we to see our race on the death-pyre?
 All man's good blasted in an atomic hour?



M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI

D. Ranga Rao

The make-shift auditorium at the Loyola Public School at Nallapadu near Guntur was packed to capacity and the audience eagerly awaited the arrival of the reputed musician who was at the zenith of her career.

Pin drop silence prevailed as the singer took the dias. It was a charity performance by M.S. Subbulakshmi. This concert was held in the late sixties.

Subbulakshmi was dressed in a green Kanchi silk saree with a red zari border in the traditional South Indian style. Diamond nose studs shone brightly in the lights as also the ear studs. She looked modest, serene and composed, with a hint of a smile on her face, a typical middle class woman of about fifty, unassuming and unostentatious, the very personification of dignity and simplicity. She was accompanied by her husband, tall and imposing Thyagarajan Sadasivam.

Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Deekshitar and Annamacharya Keerthanas, Narayana Teertha's tarangas, Meera Bhajans etc., followed one after the other in a mellifluous flow. She sang with effortless ease, feelingly, bringing out the moods of the compositions in the modulation of her voice. Her performance, a memorable one, was a perpetuation of the bhakti cult relegating technicalities to the background. Her soulful melodies wafted over the surrounding green fields, fruit and tree gardens, over the rocky boulders and reverberated on the hillocks beyond. It was an evening to remember in one's life. Music was the food on which she was fed from her childhood and she gave more and more of it to her countrymen and the world.

A koel burst into ecstatic song and Madurai Shanmukhavadiyu Subbulakshmi was born on 16th September, 1916. Her mother Shanmukha Vadivelu was a Vainik vidwan and her father,

Subrahmanya Iyer, a lawyer, was a devout person. Her grandmother Akkammal played the violin. The family lived a spartan life in a small house in a narrow lane leading to the great temple, economically not well off but musically rich. Subbulakshmi the child listened attentively the temple musicians who stopped at their house and played on their nadaswaram and mridangam and sang keerthans. She listened to the music on the neighbour's radio, sitting on the terrace of their house, for the family could not afford a radio set. Singing came naturally to young Subbulakshmi, divinely gifted as she was. It is said a flower emits fourth fragrance the moment it blossoms. Even as a child in pigtails, her sruti and raga were perfect. She sang as effortlessly as one breathes. Her father called her "Rajathippa" meaning princess little realising that his pretty princess would one day reign as the empress of music. It was her father who inculcated into her the bhakti part in singing. She was called "Kunjamma" at home affectionately.

Subbulakshmi learnt her first lessons in music from her mother. When the family shifted to Madras, they lived in a garage house in George Town. Her mother recorded songs for the HMV company established by H.M. Reddy. Subbulakshmi also recorded her songs to HMV, when she was hardly ten. It is said she gave her first concert about this time at a wedding celebration. When seventeen she held the ardent music lovers of Madras, including the redoubtable stalwarts of music, spell-bound, when the famous Araiakudi Ramanuja Iyengar could not turn up to give his concert. That concert turned the tide in her favour.

Sri Rajagopalachari introduced Subbulakshmi to Gandhiji and Nehru. "*Her music will cross the barriers of culture*" said Nehru listening to her music. The prophesy came true. "I am only a prime Minister. She is the queen of music" he added.

Behind every successful man there is woman, goes the saying. In the case of Subbulakshmi, endearingly called M.S., it was a man who moulded her career to the pinnacle. The man was Thyagarajan Sadasivam who was closely connected with the popular magazine Ananda Vikatan. M.S. married Sadasivam when she was twenty and played the dutiful wife adjusting herself to the dictates of commanding Sadasivam and carried out her mission of a devout singer of devotional songs.

M.S. had a short stint as an actress and proved her mettle on the screen as a singing star and delighted the audiences with her melodious voice. But she could not stand the rigours of film acting, sensitive as she was, and gave it up with no regrets and concentrated on singing.

Though a South Indian Karnatic musician, she won the hearts of audiences in the North as well with her keerthanas and Bhajans. Her rendering of "*Ghana Shyam Aayere*", a Meera Bhajan, won great acclaim in North India. "*Vaishnava Janato..*" was immensely liked by Gandhiji. She soon became a household name all over the country, her voice invoking gods and goddesses to bless mankind in the Suprabhatams and Sthothras rendered by her through recordings and cassettes.

To make her singing perfect she learnt the meaning of each keertan, tarang, bhajan, ashtapadi or the sthothras. By practice she perfected the diction and pronunciation, whatever the language, be it Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Sanskrit, Hindi or even English. She tried to catch the mood of the music as well as the composer and conveyed it in her renderings through her golden voice. She had the unique distinction of having rendered the Sanskrit slokas composed by the Paramacharya of Kanchi, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi and later the song written in English by C. Rajagopalachari at the UN.

Awards came pouring in seeking her,

once her talent was recognised in the country and abroad. She started winning awards from the fifties with Padma Bhushan in 1954 which culminated in her being awarded Bharatna Ratna in 1998, the first musician to win the honour in the country. Sangeetha Kalanidhi from Madras Music Academy (she was the first woman artist to win this distinction), Raman Magasasay Fellowship, Padma Vibhushan, National Professor, Member de'Honneur by the International Music Council are some of the honours, to mention a few, won by her. The Universities vied with each other to honour her with doctoral degrees. As awards came pouring in, Rukmini Arundale said to Subbulakshmi "*Kunjamma, leave some of the awards to others*".

She hopped around the globe and sang in London, Frankfurt, Geneva, Paris, Tokyo, Singapore, Manila, Moscow and many other centres and covered the distance from coast to coast in the U.S and gave performances for the construction of temples in the U.S. She sang before Queen Elizabeth II. Helen Keller felt her throat with fingers while M.S. sang and remarked "*she sang like an angel*". Decades earlier, Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer, the veena maestro had said to young M.S. "*Child you carry a veena in your throat*". Not only a veena, a cuckoo had also made her throat its nest. Sarojini Naidu once told M.S. that she (M.S.) was the true nightingale of India and not herself. She was prepared to give away the title to M.S. ! Bade Gulam Ali Khan called her "*Suswara Subhalakshmi*". It is said that Zuben Mehta was reluctant to perform after a M.S. concert.

What was the secret behind the success of M.S. as a musician? Apart from the fact that she was a born musician and was blessed by Dame Luck, her dedication, devotion, commitment, religious fervour and humanness supported by humility and modesty made her the queen of vocal communication which "*transcended words*" as the New York Times commented. Though times changed, her values remained unchanged. It were

these qualities that carried her from the tin roofed garage in Madras to Cornegie Hall at the UN., to the Albert Hall in London and other famous Halls the world over. Practice was her religion. In the seventh and eighth decades of her life she practiced claiming that she was still a student. She earned crores of rupees through her renderings and concerts but she gave away her earnings for noble causes, to institutions, to temples and other such bodies. The

satisfaction of helping others kept her spirits up and made her long innings for seven decades as a performing musician a memorable record.

India lost a true 'ratna' in her demise, a jewel that represented the quintessence of Indian music. M.S. is no more with us. But her name and music will "resound for ages".

□

TREES

Bhavana S. Chari

Trees, the embodiments of natural beauty,
Constitute the "flora" of our unique planet
earth,
Flourishing, in moderate climate, no rival
per-se
The life-giving source, to man and animal
kingdom.
I delve in deep contemplation, what, if there,
were no trees, would happen to the species,
innumerable,
that sustain, on congenial environment,
Where would be, the minute specimens in
this large world
God adorned this planet, with green vegetation,
As precious gems would do to a kingly attire,
The balance in nature, to preserve and
protect, To shelter

and sustain the poor and the homeless,
The pine, teak and devdar of the
mountainous, to the
palm and coconut groves, and asoka,
Neem and banyan of the orchards, from
sugar-cane, rice and maize of lush fields,
To the rose, lily and sunflower of the garden.
Nurtured by rain, ponds and rivulets, in the
wild,
The over-flowing streams and channels in
villages.
To the waters that provide, blithe
surroundings,
The trees, the very elixir of human habitation!

□

THE EDICTS OF ASOKA

Rao S. Maradani

What is an edict?

An edict is a royal command desiring the citizens to do or not to do a particular thing. It is also an official decree publicly proclaimed. Asoka's edicts are in the nature of official pronouncements of policy and instructions to his officers and subjects. They contain many personal touches and the drafts were probably composed by the emperor himself. The most ancient and popular edicts in India are the edicts of Asoka, which he got engraved on rocks and pillars alike. These edicts provide us an insight into the mind of Asoka, his concept of Dharma, the eternal good and the measures taken by him for the welfare and happiness of all living things.

So far 16 Major rock edicts, 4 Minor rock edicts, 3 Inscriptions and 7 major pillar edicts, 4 minor rock edicts, 2 pillar inscriptions have been discovered.

The edicts of Asoka, engraved on the rocks and pillars were discovered at 42 places viz. India (36), Nepal (2), Pakistan (2) and Afghanistan (2). The chronology of Asoka edicts are reckoned from the year of coronation of Asoka. The edicts recount not his victories and deeds of glory like other rulers but exhorts his people towards virtuous conduct, warns them of the perils of sin and preaches love of neighbours and tolerance.

The inscriptions of Asoka which are scattered all over of his vast empire definitely provide an authentic account of the various steps taken by him to spread Dhamma, the ethical and religious content, state policy and social transformation he sought to bring about a glimpse of his personal life. In all modesty he disclaimed the use of any of the grand titles customary for imperial monarchs to display. He mentions his own name only in two inscriptions of maski

(Karnataka) and Gujarat. The wonderful rock inscriptions may be described generally as Sermons and Dhamma, the law of piety.

Asoka the Mauryan emperor is remembered not so much for the extent of his empire, decidedly the largest in the ancient world, not even for promoting Buddhism, a regional faith, into a world religion. Rather he is cherished more as the only ruler in history to have abjured violence and avoided expansion as state policy. Stricken with remorse at the horror of Kalinga war the sensitive king felt great revulsion against bloodshed and exhorted his progeny not to seek fresh conquests.

Asokan Empire comprised the countries now known as Afghanistan and spread as far as the Hindu Kush, Baluchistan Mahran, Sind, Kutch, and the Swat Valley with adjoining regions. Kashmir, Nepal and the whole of India proper, except the extreme southern peninsula held by Chola, Pandya, Satyapura and Keralaputra kings. His dominion was far more extensive than the British India of yester years.

The edicts contain many personal touches and the drafts were probably composed by the emperor himself. One Dhamma, one language, one script called Brahmi, was used, in most of his inscriptions. The two inscriptions at Shahbazgarhi and Manshara are in Karosthi script. An inscription discovered at Kandahar in Afghanistan is bilingual and the other one at Lamghan near Jallalabad is in Arabic.

The text of the documents is nearly perfect. A clerical error or engraver's blunder very rarely occurs. The language was invariably a forum of Prakrit, the vernacular language of the day, which people spoke.

The edicts were written on rocks and pillars situated in great cities on the main lines of communication or at sacred spots frequented by pilgrims. It implies that knowledge of reading and writing was widely diffused and that many people must have been able to read the documents. The percentage of literacy amongst the Buddhist population in Asoka's time was higher than it was in many provinces of the British India.

The edicts of Asoka are a living testimony of his genius as a king and man. They depict the philosophy of humanized culture of which he himself was the true representative. As the whole personality of Asoka is embedded in his edicts, it is impossible to understand him without studying them. Thus, Asokan edicts tell their own tale in a simple way. He was an unrewarded specimen of humanity. How Buddhism and Humanism blended in the personality of Asoka is a miracle.

The edicts are written in the name of King Priyadarsi, the beloved son of the god in first person. He used the word T in all the edicts. I am reproducing the gist of the many edicts that are relevant. A number of books on Asoka and his edicts can be purchased and read. 1. Asoka, Vincent A Smith, 2. Asoka Dr. Bhandarkar, 3. Asoka the Great, D.C. Ahir 4. Asoka the Beloved Son of the Gods.

Now let us read Asoka's edicts drafted by him in the name of king Priyadarsi, the beloved son of the Gods.

Kalinga Rock Edict II

Against aggression and tension between states

All men are my children. Just as I seek the welfare and happiness of my own children in this world and the next I seek the same thing for all men.

My only wish to the unconquered people along the borders of my dominion is that they should

not fear me, but trust me that they should expect only happiness from me, not misery. They should understand further that I will forgive them for offences which can be forgiven. I want that they should be induced by my example to practice Dhamma and they should attain happiness in this world and the next. They must perform their duties in this way and establish their confidence in the king, being assured that he is like a father to them, and that he loves them as he loves himself and that they are like his own children.

Obedience to Parents: Rock edict

One should obey mother, father and elders. One should be steadfast towards living beings, one should adhere to truth. Pupils should honour the teachers, and show proper behaviour towards relatives, friends, Brahman, Samana ascetics, and the right kind of behaviour towards slaves and servants.

Rock Edict II: Medical and Welfare

Provision has been made for two kinds of medical treatment. Treatments for men and for animals, medicines, herbs suitable for men and animals have been imported and planted wherever they were not previously available. Also where roots and fruits were lacking they have been imported and planted for the use of men and animals.

Rock Edict VI

I consider the promotion of people's welfare as my highest duty. No task is more important to me than promoting the well being of all people. Such work as I accomplish, contributes to discharging the debts I owe to all living creatures to make them happy in this world and to help them attain heaven in the next.

Pillar Edict VII

I have ordered banyan trees to be planted along the roads to give shade to men and animals. I have ordered mango trees to be planted. I have ordered a well to be dug every half kos (about half a mile)

and I have ordered rest houses to be built. I have had many watering stations built for the convenience of men and animals. I have done what I have done primarily in order that the people may follow the path of Dhamma with faith and devotion.

Pillar Edict XIII

King Priyadarshi thinks that even a person who wrongs him must be forgiven for wrongs that can be forgiven. King Priyadarshi considers moral conquest (that is conquest by Dhamma), Dharma Vijay as the most important conquest.

Kalinga Edict II (Rock Edict XIII)

King Priyadarshi desires security, self control, impartiality and cheerfulness for all living creatures. This edict on Dhamma has been inscribed so that my sons and great grandsons who may come after me should not think of new conquests. Let them consider moral conquest as the only true conquest.

The Objectives of inclusion of Dhamma (Rock Edict IV)

The sound of war drums has become the call to Dhamma (rather than to war) summoning the people – to abstain from killing animals and from cruelty to living beings, Kindliness or human and family relations, respect for priests and ascetics and obedience to mother, father and elders.

Rock Edict VII: Welfare of all

I have ordered my officials to look after the affairs of the Samgha (the Buddhist religious order), some to take care of the Brahmin and Ajivika, some to work among the Nirgrandhas (the Jain monks) and some among the various other religious sects.

Rock Edict VIII:

Asoka's participation in the Dhamma program as administrator

King Priyadarshi undertakes moral tours (Dharma yatras). He visits priests and ascetics and makes gifts to them. He interacts with the aged and gives them money, he visits the people of rural areas instructing in Dhamma

and discussing it with them.

Rock Edict VI:

I consider the promotion of the people's welfare as my highest duty. No task is more important to me than promoting the well being of all the people. I owe to all living creatures to make them happy in this world and to help them in heaven in the next.

Rock Edict II

Respect and Truth; Brahmagiri

King Priyadarsi says – one should obey one's father and mother. One should respect the supreme value and sacredness of life. One should speak the truth. In the same way, pupils should honour their teachers. In families one should behave with fitting courtesy to elders. One should practice these virtues of Dhamma.

Rock Edict XI

Charity and the Kingship of mankind

King Priyadarsi says there is no gift that can equal the gift of Dhamma. The gift consists in proper treatment of slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father liberality to friends, acquaintances, relatives, priests and ascetics and abstention from the slaughter of animals.

If one acts this way one achieves the gift of Dhamma, happiness in this world and infinite merit in the world to come.

Rock Edict VII & Rock Edict XII

Against religious tolerance and discrimination within the community

King Priyadarsi wishes members of all faiths to live everywhere in his kingdom. King Priyadarsi honours men of all faiths, members of religious orders and laymen alike, with gifts and various marks of esteem. The faith of all others deserves to be honoured for one reason or another. By honouring them one exalts one's own faith and at the same time performs a service to other faiths. King Priyadarsi desires men of all faiths to know each other's doctrines and to acquire a sound doctrine.

Pillar Edict V, Rock Edict I
Restrictions on feasts and the slaughtering of animals, pardoning prisoners

No living creature shall be slaughtered here (Pataliputra, Asoka's capital city) and no festive gathering shall be held. King Priyadarsi sees a great many evils in festive gatherings yet he also approves of some kind of festivals.

Many hundreds of thousands of living creatures were formerly slaughtered every day for curries in the kitchen of his majesty. At present when this ediction Dhamma is inscribed, only three living creatures are killed daily (two peacocks and a deer) and the deer is not slaughtered regularly. In future not even these animals shall be slaughtered.

Pillar Edict V

This is about killing animals, birds etc. some of his orders are as follows:

1. Forests must not be burned without reason or in order to kill living creatures.
2. Bulls, rams etc should not castrated on full moon days. During the twenty six years, since my coronation, I have ordered the release of prisoners 25 times.

Rock Edict III

Public Administration

King Priyadarsi says, obedience to mother and father, liberality to friends, acquaintances, relatives, priests and ascetics, abstentions from killing living creatures, and moderation in spending money and acquiring possessions are all meritorious.

Rock Edict V

His officers are commissioned to work with all sects in establishing and promoting Dhamma in seeing to the welfare and happiness of all those devoted to Dhamma among the Yonas, Kambhojas, Pitinikas and other people living on the western borders of my kingdom.

My officers are also commissioned to work among prisoners to distribute money to those who have many children to secure the release of prisoners, pardon those who are very aged.

I command my descendents will follow this Dhamma.

Pillar Edict IV

King Priyadarsi says that provincial governors (Rajukas) have to administer fearlessly and impartially in securing the welfare and happiness of the people etc.

Sanchi Pillar Edict

Sangha and disruption of Sangha

The Sangha of the monks and Sangha of the nuns have each been visited to unite as long as my sons and great grandchildren rule and as long as the sun and moon shine. It is my desire that the Sangha be united and endure forever.

Sarnath Pillar Edict

If a monk or a nun disrupts the Sangha, he or she shall be required to put on a white robe and to live in non residence. This edict shall be published both in the Sangha of the monks and in the Sangha of the nuns.

King Priyadarsi instructs his officials, those stationed in Pataliputra to take precautions so that no one shall disrupt the Sangha.

Bharbra Rock Edict

King Priyadarsi of Maghada conveys his greetings to the Sangha and wishes them good health and prosperity. You know revered sirs, the extent of my reverence and faith in Buddha, the Dhamma and Sangha. Whatever the Lord Buddha has said, reverend Sirs, is of course well said but it is proper for me to enumerate the texts which express true dhamma and which may last for ever.

The following are the texts on Dhamma.

1. The exhibition of moral discipline (Vinaya, Samokasa)
2. The modes of ideal life. (Aliya – Vasani)
3. Fears of the future (An agata Bhayani)
4. The song of the hermits (muni-gatha)
5. Discourse on the saintly life (mauneyasute)

Against Sins and passion in the individual

King Priyadarsi says: One should obey one's father and mother and should respect the supreme value and sacredness of life. One should speak the truth. One should practice these virtues of Dhamma. In the same way, pupils should honour their teachers and in families one should behave with fitting courtesy to relatives. This is the traditional rule of Dhamma and it is conducive to long life. Men should act according to it.

*Rock Edict IX**As rite and ceremonial*

King Priyadarsi the beloved of the gods says:

1. People perform various ceremonies. Among the occasions on which ceremonies are performed are sickness, marriages of sons, daughters, children's birth and departures on journeys. It is right that ceremonies be performed. But this bears little fruits. The ceremony of Dhamma (Dharma mangala) on the

contrary is very fruitful. It consists in proper treatment of slaves and servants, reverence to teachers, restraint of violence towards living creatures and liberality to priests and ascetics.

These and like actions are called the ceremonies of Dharma.

2. Women in particular have recourse to many diverse trivial and meaningless ceremonies.

The objectives of inculcation of Dhamma Rock Edict IV

For many hundreds of years in the past, slaughter of animals, cruelty to living creature, discourtesy to relative and disrespect for priests and ascetics have been increasing.

But now because of Priyadarsi's practice of Dhamma the sound of war drum has become the call to Dhamma. Priyadarsi's inculcation of Dhamma has increased beyond anything observed in many hundreds of years, abstention from killing animals and from cruelty to living beings, kindness in human and family relations respect for priests and ascetics and obedience to mother, father and elders.

*Administration:**Reporting the affairs of the people**A Major Rock Edict VI Girnar*

The reporters may appear before me for reporting the affairs of the people whether I am engaged in eating or in harem or in the bedchamber or on a promenade or in the carriage, or carriage in the march. And I am now attending people's affairs at all places. □

FACE TO FACE WITH THE ALMIGHTY

G.S. Rastogi

One night when in deep slumber I was suddenly jolted awake. I saw a Light and heard a Voice : "*So you want to interview me.*" I went cold with fear and remained tongue-tied. The Voice asked me to have no fear. I mustered up courage and mumbled a few inaudible words. At this I felt a gentle touch of a paternal hand on my head. Instantly a current ran through me. It soothed my nerves and instilled enough heart in me to address this benign presence. Instinctively I knew it to be the hand of no one else but the Almighty and humbly requested Him to assume a normal human form to facilitate communication. He, at once, assumed the form of a dignified elderly man and miraculously helped me to be completely at my ease. He asked me to have no fear and put any questions that I wanted to satisfy myself.

What more could I want ? I started in a feeble voice asking His forgiveness for being audacious enough to nurse the idea of posing any questions to Him. The Almighty smiled and encouraged me to go ahead with my queries.

I humbly addressed Him, "*Kindly allow me to put some questions to you to enlighten myself and others.*"

Almighty : Go ahead and put your questions fearlessly,

I : I have a long standing fear that you are an airy nothing. Is it true? Please excuse my impertinence.

Almighty : It is very true !

I : Then, what is your identity ?

Almighty : An airy nothing.

I : Then how is it that you are omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent?

Almighty : I have been bestowed with all these powers by the imagination of man, ancient and modern, civilised and uncivilised.

I : They say that nothing in the world can happen without your nod, not even a leaf can sway without your permission.

Almighty : So have men spoken and written about me and my powers. They are a part of my build-up. It stands to reason that there are countless species, animate and inanimate, and as far as the leaves are concerned they are so numerous that to assume that I keep watch over each one of them seems ludicrous.

I : Have you any form or shape ?

Almighty : No. Essentially I have no form or shape. But I am supposed to adopt any form or shape or remain an invisible spirit. Ironically, people have been worshipping me in different forms and have often made idols of me.

I : They say that the voice of the conscience is your voice. It is really so ?

Almighty : Nonsense. Conscience is manageable. The traditions and the prevalent values of society determine our conscience. But it does help and guide one in life as per his beliefs.

I : From ages immemorial men have prayed to you for security, prosperity, welfare of the family, cure from disease, victory in war and for solutions to all the problems of life that beset them. Can you deny this ?

Almighty : If you keep in mind my identity, (whatever it means) then you should know that I am indifferent to all these prayers.

I : They say that Faith can move mountains. What is your response to such a faith in you ?

Almighty : To an extent your statement is true. Your sincere prayers give you hope and confidence. You work harder which makes your path to success easier. Let me illustrate it for you with a fable. A farmer had four sons. When he was on deathbed he told his sons that there was gold buried in his land and he bequeathed one quarter of the land to each one

of them. Soon after he died. The sons dug the land deep with great labour but to their horror there was no trace of gold. They were truly disappointed and angry with their dead father. Still they sowed and watered the land well. And lo ! in time there grew up a very rich crop that fetched them gold and prosperity. The message went home and love and respect for their dead father returned. In the same way if you have faith and work sincerely towards the achievement of your goal, success is more likely to crown you with laurels.

I : They say that Faith is like a blind man's stick upon which he leans for support. Do you agree with this view ?

Almighty : This is true. It helps one to face life with greater elan and vigour. Besides he can bear the misfortunes of life with greater fortitude. In spirit he feels a bit more secure as he has someone to lean upon for support and nurse the hope for a better future.

I : How is it that you are invested with all the powers and benevolence but no evil is attributed to you ? If you are the Lord of the universe and brook no rival, then how does the Devil come into the picture ? You should have no difficulty in subduing him. But everyone knows that good and evil live side by side. You are supposed to possess all the goodness and the Devil, a source of all evil and suffering. Kindly throw light on this knotty problem.

Almighty : This is a very tricky question. Man attributes all the nobility, virtues, kindness, justice etc. to me, But when his prayers fail and misfortune pursues him like a shadow, he finds solace in thinking that there must be some flaw in him or that fate is unkind to him and resumes his humdrum existence with the hope that times will change and I will ultimately come to his rescue. Hope carries his life forward.

I : Excuse me, Father. You are dodging my question. Is the Devil someone outside of your existence ?

Almighty : If you insist then I must tell you that both, the Devil and I reside in man's imagination. Under uncongenial circumstances

or when faced with unbearable hardships or threat to life man often thinks that the Devil holds the reins of his life. Sometimes black magic is used to exercise the man with the evil spirit as the Devil is supposed to have possessed the man. They pray to God as well, who alone, if He wills, can defeat the Devil. Devil is my antithesis. As I am supposed to be the ultimate arbiter of human destiny I alone can overcome the Devil. People think that I am good and the Devil is bad but good cannot survive without evil. Just as we can't recognise light without darkness. So Devil is a reaction to 'God'. They are two sides of a coin.

I : But how does evil or vice come into existence ?

Almighty : It is simply a question of faith. Man, from time immemorial has reposed complete faith in me (or gods and goddesses). He thinks that I am all pervasive and all powerful and that I can do no wrong. Man doesn't want to think that I can be unjust or unkind.

I : Father ! my question remains unanswered.

Almighty : You are very persistent. There is nothing good or bad. It is only man's thinking which is governed by his social laws and traditions that make things and actions good or bad. So many creatures on earth live their lives without thinking of good or bad, moral or immoral. They act according to their need for survival. It is only man who cannot remain content with bare survival. His mind keeps goading him to organise, to invent, to discover, to possess, to dominate and all this leads to conflict and suffering. The trouble lies with man's ambition and greed. The more progress he makes towards civilisation, the greater is the incidence of conflict and tension.

I : Is there any remedy ?

Almighty : There is no remedy. Man's restless mind, gregarious instinct, love, hate friendliness, enmity, likes and dislikes, greed and jealousy, instinct to possess and dominate etc. can never allow him to live in peace either with himself or with society.

I : How is it that some people can predict the future, astrologers, the oracle, for example. Some saints are known to have foresight into the future.

Almighty : This may be true but it doesn't prove anything. Coming events cast their shadows. Some people by following certain discipline or austerities develop some sort of powers, difficult to explain rationally, and may predict certain events or trends correctly. At times, rarely though, people get into a trance, e.g. in devotional singing and dancing, and may be able to foresee things clearly. It is clairvoyance. Probably their practices lead to certain undefined chemical and cellular changes in the brain which endow one with such powers. Intuition plays a great part in it. But such powers are of little help in furthering knowledge of life or in alleviating the suffering of mankind on any large scale.

I : Do you play any role in the birth and death of a man ?

Almighty : I have no role in it. Its purely a biological arrangement of Nature.

I : Do you, in any way, determine the destiny of man ?

Almighty : I have absolutely nothing to do with man's destiny. There are innumerable factors that determine his destiny. These factors are largely beyond human control but many social conditions are the result of collective social and economic forces.

I : But you must own the reality of your being. Otherwise how does this universe with its numerous species has come into existence? Surely someone must have planned all this creation.

Almighty : You see, even if I am a reality, I don't possess those immense powers over life and death attributed to me.

I : But we notice that the world and the universe move according to some plan. There must be some sort of intelligence, in whatever garb, that has planned this universe and regulates the life and existence of the smallest and the biggest things. Father! Can you throw

some light on this puzzle ?

Almighty : It's a question whose answer I do not know. But, surely, I can say that whoever has created this universe must have been created by someone else and so on ad infinitum. So this question can not be resolved. What seems likely is, at some unknown point of time an immense mass was somehow hurled (something like the Big Bang theory) or some huge mass formation or formations came into being by the dust in space, as is happening even today. These solidified and have been hurtling in space and in the process some broke into smithereens. Still there remain some immensely big pieces either of the original lump or of new formations and these have been hurtling in space without a stop. Now every unit, even the smallest one, contains the secret of its future. Those units which were blessed with life at some stage have all their future codified within them. Every cell, every gene knows its future, even to the smallest detail. So, when people say that not a leaf can flutter without the consent of God, perhaps this God, that people talk about, is present in everything and everywhere.

I : Kindly elaborate. Are you involved directly in controlling each and everything in the universe ?

Almighty : No, just as a King governs his empire through his ministers and governors and an hierarchy of officials etc. in the same way I have my lieutenants everywhere in the universe who oversee their departments through lower officers and other ranks. It is a collective work of which, you may say, I'm the head.

I : Is it something like our human society ? Man has made motor cars, aeroplanes, computers, robots, has found treatment for many diseases etc. but individually most of us can't make an aeroplane or a rocket or perform a surgical operation. It is the collective effort which has ultimately led to great discoveries and inventions. Most men have contributed in small bits and some have had a major share.

Society is daily becoming more and more complex.

Almighty : Yes, In much the same way the world is evolving from simplicity to more and more complexity. If you insist I'm the overlord but, obviously, I do not wield control over everything but the laws of the universe have so evolved that I don't have to exert at all. Things go on smoothly according to natural laws but sometimes with great upheavals just as it happens in your society.

I : This you have made fairly clear. Still, there must be someone who plans our destiny, who keeps a tab on our joys and sorrows, someone who holds the strings of every actor in the drama of life that is permanently staged on the surface of our planet Earth and may be elsewhere.

Almighty : There lies your mistake. Every creature is born with its own individual instincts and characteristics and behaves accordingly. As far as the human beings are concerned they all have in different proportions emotions of love and hate, joy and sorrow, ambition and contentment, greed and jealousy, kindness and cruelty etc. They live together, their interests often clash and they fight and kill each other but they cannot completely free themselves from their attributes. In spite of Buddha, Confucius, Christ and others who have preached men to abjure violence and to love each other and to live in peace with fellow men but man will remain man and good and bad deeds are for all to see. I have no role to play in all this. Whatever one does he produces some reaction in others, agreeable or disagreeable and the world goes on merrily, God or no God.

I : Lord ! You paint a very gloomy picture.

Almighty : I can't help it. I am powerless. Neither have I the power nor can I take sides. But one thing is sure. If you can walk out of yourself and watch the teeming humanity from outside then you'll have no reason to complain. Nothing is permanent. Day and night, joy and sorrow pursue each other eternally. There is joy and tenderness of love and soon it is converted

into sorrow and the bitterness of jealousy and revenge. There is a constant change of light and shade and therein lies the charm of life. How can I, even if I have the power, change this. If I do there wont be any thrill in life. There would be the monotony of death.

I : They say that every creature has a soul and that it is immortal. How do you explain it ?

Almighty : Soul is the seat of human personality which is believed to survive after death. Ancient Egyptians believed that, after its sojourn, one day the soul would return in the same body. Hindus believe in the transmigration of soul. In Christianity, it is the spiritual part of a person capable of redemption from the power of sin through divine grace. It is also believed to be another name of God which explains much of its nature. Soul is immortal in much the same way as our genes perpetuate themselves for thousands of years and contain in some part, howsoever small, the qualities of its ancestor.

I : It is said that some saints possess prophetic gifts and supernatural powers to soothe and comfort others.

Almighty : Your question has already been partly answered, still how does it matter if they possess such powers. They cannot relieve the ills of humanity. In a few cases people may feel benefited by their blessings but the overwhelming mass of humanity lives on as it has lived through the millennia, now rising, now falling, never at peace for any length of time. These, so called, saviours of humanity are mere cogs in the wheel of life. Whenever any natural calamity, like earthquake, cyclonic storm, epidemic, famine etc. takes place all the plethora of moral teaching remains useless and all, virtuous and vicious are crushed under the juggernaut of Nature. Life may be precious but Nature never looks back in its relentless march.

I : Excuse me, Father! You said "life may be precious". Yes people say that life is precious. How so? Is there any purpose of life? Kindly throw light on this intriguing question.

Almighty : It is rather churlish to think that life has a purpose. Life is just there and has to be lived. One should lead his life as well as one can. No doubt there is an inherent charm in life, no one from the lowest to the highest wants to die. However harsh one's lot in life might be, people and creatures are prone to save themselves from any impending danger to their life by fighting or just slinking away from danger. Herein lies the secret. Life has visibly no purpose but to preserve itself as long as possible and to live it in a way that gives one maximum satisfaction. It is precious because one can endure any amount of suffering just for the sake of remaining alive.

I : Can you tell me what is meant by enlightenment ?

Almighty : Essentially it means one who has shed all his illusions of love, attachments, hopes and ambitions. He rises above these. Life holds no temptations or complications for him. He is free of all encumbrances and attains tranquility of mind.

I : Why do such enlightened ones go out to preach?

Almighty : They want to share their experiences and also to free men from illusions.

I : Such enlightened persons are highly revered. Their words are often taken as gospel truth. In a way it does the work of brain-washing. Perhaps herein lies the catch. The intention is noble but the results are unhealthy. Mind should be free and evolve its own salvation. It limits one's freedom to think. Some windows of the mind become clogged. Man develops cliches and the ground for conflict with men who think differently, is prepared. Do you agree, Father!

Almighty : Yes, It hardly does any good but one must use one's own discretion.

I : They say that you are very merciful and kind to the poor and the oppressed. Is it true?

Almighty : They say what suits them. I am always neutral. Everyone's lot is determined not by me but by one's birth, environment and

circumstances in which one lives. It is the pressure of social forces and one's personal effort and ingenuity that determine the prosperity and the well being of a person. My name is invoked as a matter of custom or as an excuse.

I : Lord ! Can you give any advice, so that we may lead a peaceful life ?

Almighty : Celebrate life and never complain. Life is a boon.

I : Lord ! Can you tell me something about inspiration?

Almighty : When we say that a man is inspired we mean to say that all one's faculties are in harmony and poised to give their best in whatever one does. These forces are not always at one's command. Partly this is the reason why it is nigh impossible to repeat oneself exactly after a lapse of time. Even I, with all the powers supposed to be at my command, can't produce two things identical in their minutest detail. One's performance may be good normally but when inspired it is bound to be of a higher order. Besides you know that at times an artist writes a poem or paints a picture and sometime later seeing the same he wonders whether it is his work, so novel it looks to him. It is true in other disciplines also. The likely reason is that everyman is possessed of some quality of which he is totally unaware. Then at some time this quality surfaces, may be for a short time, and the work that one undertakes at such time results in an inspired performance.

I : One last query, Father ! How do you explain revelation ?

At this his brow twitched a little and frowning He dismissed the meeting with a wave of hand. And lo ! He changed into a tower of fire and like a rocket shot into space. The sight took my breathe away and agape with wonder my eyes opened wide. It took me quite a while to gather my wits and to comprehend the situation. I realised that I had overshot my privilege. After all He was not there to let me into all the secrets of the universe and life. □

OBJECTIVE CORRELATIVE

Dr. K. Sandhya

The study of literature, it is said, makes a man a man. It may often make a man a woman—a fragile being with delicate sensibilities and sentiments or vice-versa. No doubt the latent senses get softened and aestheized. The “emotions recollected in tranquility” become alive and one begins to wonder how one remains passive and inattentive to the countless things and events all around. The human clock starts its duty early in the morning around five o’ clock. Since then we are participants in or spectators of the continuously run human show; but we hardly express our inner-selves.

As a student and teacher of literature, I personally face certain conflicts and embarrassments. Is it because of too much of sensitivity? Or subjectivity? Or pathetic fallacy?

I believe in the role that discipline plays in life, having been brought up in such environment and my education in strict missionary institutions right from the first standard to graduation. Insistence on the right behaviour and conduct has become almost a part of me. I just cannot stand any unruly conduct, noisy atmosphere or to put it in a nutshell, any little thing out of its groove. If anyone is late to the class, I am unhappy; if any student misses the test, I am rather displeased. I detest postponing tests and exams just for a handful of girls. I do not normally say anything to them; but I am troubled. These are my traits. I married a man brought up by a disciplinarian like myself and I have had no problems whatsoever, in living harmoniously with him.

But the problems started after we attained parenthood. We successfully carried on with our concepts till the girl and the boy were put to school. We wanted them to go to bed at eight o’ clock and they did so. After they were around four, the commotion started. The boy

wanted the Popeye show when we wanted him to go for his bath, the girl, though older than the boy, still timid, would obey but reluctantly. With stouts, shrieks and threats, they would get ready and the rickshaw was to arrive. The rickshaw man was far away from the concept of punctuality. That would invariably lead to the children going late. Sometimes, he would come much before time, but there would be a traffic jam or my boy would not be ready. I began to realise that external factors are beyond my jurisdiction. There is no point in working myself up about small matters.

The same kind of reconciliation dawned on me with regard to my children’s performance in tests. Sometimes a guest may arrive, or someone in the family is not well or a social obligation—so much so children are not ready fully for the test. The strong holds on my convictions began to loosen. I have swayed towards laxity rather, being more humane and considerate in my views and relationships.

When a student came five minutes late to the class, I would ask her to be on time and not to repeat it but let her in. When a girl came panting to the examination hall sweating profusely, while I was distributing answer sheets for a college exam I could understand her perfectly. A traffic jam, or the late coming of a bus or a sudden spot inspection by the Transport Authorities. Her gasp itself revealed many things to me. At once I could visualise myself in her position and feel on her behalf. A student had clean forgotten about a test she had to write as part of revision, tears welled up in her eyes when I gave the others questions. She came to me and cried like a three year old saying she had to attend on her mother who had a bout of fever the previous night. Hence did not study. When I was raw without any life’s experiences, I would launch into a big lecture, but now I again related myself

to the situation. I pondered if I was becoming unprofessional. Liberal, derelict in carrying out my duties. Some instinct in me said that I was not. I prayed to the Almighty to guide me. He at once answered my prayers. Fortunately, I am always right when I take the decision to excuse or exempt some feeling with them in their problems; I am stern with those who play truant and try to fool me. With His guidance to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious I carry out

my responsibilities without causing any hindrance to the norms of the place of work. I can see my own child when someone is in trouble. I see myself when things go astray. It is indeed an eye-opener. Anything might happen to anyone at any time of life. Why can't we be more kind, forgiving, understanding, concerned and sympathetic? Slowly we will learn to empathize with the others. Objective correlative!

□

WATERFALL

Dr. R. R. Menon

There's no adventure like the waterfall's.

Born and brought up on the snowy hills that fill the ace photographer's stills, facing all the while the vast, clear sky getting off cloudy, knowing not why, she needs to search below on earth what frequent mood-changes are worth. The river flowing down suddenly faces a fall. It had majestically climbed down from a height a-glow with rippling graces to spread the blessing of life and trace the cause of gloom, the search transforms itself as a mission of charity, and charms a whole low-lying, parched world with water as Darwinians rush the weak to the slaughter.

It yearns now to descend to lower valleys where tear-drained eyes from crowded alleys anxiously see the dams intent on release of water for the rich on their higher perches, checkmating flows to the lower reaches. The water-fall remains beautiful, no matter whether flowing free or is locked up later. Unflagging in its nerve it discovers the root-cause, avarice, but still goes on with zest on its quest-turned mission on any route, natural or directed, with no thought of rest. Man does his worst to pollute, to hijack a gift of help on a wealth-creation track, forgetting the grandeur and the grace of a waterfall rushing on a self-giving race.

□

AS I PADDLE.....

Srinivasa Rangaswami

As I paddle my way to the distant shore
I know it is not my prowess or skill with the oar
that carries me, but the kindly winds of heaven,
the clear blue sky and the deep running waters
that set my course and the direction –
all as decreed.

□

HAPPINESS

What if I don't make to the victory stand
To the wild acclaim of an admiring crowd,
A ringsider I can still be, to lustily cheer
the winner. With the winner ever,
never once a loser, I know
the happiness of being happy
at the happiness of others being happy –
the joy of being a drop
in an ever-expanding expanse of happiness.

□

DR. A.S.RAO, THE ARCHITECT OF THE ECIL

I.Satyasree

The architect of the prestigious Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL), Dr. A. S. Rao, was born on 20, September, 1914, at Mogallu Village in West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. He had his early education in the Municipal School at Eluru. He obtained his Master's Degree in physics from Benares Hindu University. He pursued advanced research and also taught at the same university for some time. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the then Vice-Chancellor of the university, recognised his talent and potential and encouraged his research. By dint of his brilliant record, Rao was selected for the Tata Scholarship and acquired Master's Degree from Stanford University, U.S.A. His close association with Dr. Homi Bhabha, the father of Atomic Energy in India, began when he started working at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Dr. Bhabha had great appreciation for his work.

Dr. A.S. Rao hailed from a very ordinary middle class family. Yet, he always had lofty ideals and great dreams. He constantly strove hard to realise his goals and aspirations. He had the good fortune of working in close association with Dr. Bhabha for nearly sixteen years and took an active part in the onerous task of designing and building up the APSARA, the first Nuclear Reactor in India. Having realised that India was lagging behind the countries in the West in the field of Electronics, he conceptualised ECIL and became the torch-bearer of the Electronics revolution in our country. His contribution to the establishment and growth of the ECIL is praiseworthy. He set up the ECIL in 1967 in Hyderabad to support the Atomic Energy and the Space Department programmes. But for his earnest efforts it would not have been located in Hyderabad. He worked

as the Managing Director of ECIL from 1967 to 1978, facing several challenges and hardships.

The ECIL started with five hundred employees on 17, April, 1967 at Kapra, Hyderabad, and at present seven thousand people are employed in it. The ECIL Television sets were efficient and popular for a very long time. This tremendous growth is the result of Dr. Rao's singular effort and sense of dedication. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, the Indian Government conferred on him the 'Padmasree' in 1960 and 'Padmabhushan' in 1972. He was honoured by several universities and organisations and received the Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar award in 1965.

Dr. Rao was a man of sterling qualities and a true humanitarian who had led a simple life. He was loved by everyone who came into his contact. ECIL employees had nearly a thousand houses as a private colony in an area of 1070 acres and named the locality A. S. Rao Nagar in grateful memory of this great man. This itself is a tribute to this great scientist, who lives in the hearts of the people.

The employees close to him recall how Dr. A. S. Rao was angry with them for naming the colony after him. It shows his simplicity, humility and self-effacing service. He did not accept the offer of the free gift of a plot in the colony. Though he was the Director of the ECIL, he purchased an EC Television set with his own money. Instances like this are galore.

He shunned publicity, limelight and media hype. He politely declined the offer of several organisations to felicitate him. He was averse to being garlanded. He led a simple life almost

like a rishi. He would wash the utensils if the servant was absent. He washed his clothes. Even at the age of 88, he would prepare tea for his guests and serve it himself. He strongly believed in self-reliance and self-help. At his age, he used to walk two kilometers daily to maintain his health. He preferred to travel by bus even when he was in a high position.

Dr. Rao was a stickler for discipline. He followed high principles of conduct in

discharging his duties. For example, when he was working as the Managing Director of the ECIL, his second son Radhakrishna was dismissed for the simple reason of negligence. What an exemplary conduct especially in these days of corruption, favouritism and nepotism.

Dr A.S. Rao passed away on 31, October, 2003 at the ripe old age of 89. India lost a distinguished scientist, genius-par excellence and above all a man of character.

□

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

D.V. Sahani

In the name of development
Man is set on milking the Earth Cow
To a horrifying extent
When it will give nothing, but blood
O! drum-beaters of development
Encouraging industrialism and consumerism
Resulting in indiscriminate felling of trees
Creating pollution beyond tolerance limits
Just imagine
What will happen to our environment
If all the countries become developed?
Exhaust fumes of millions of automobiles
Overcasting the sky
Creating holes in the layer of ozone
Not an iota of air
Nor a drop of water

Will be free from pollution
And life then would become extinct
Earth becoming a lifeless planet
Like the Moon
There is need to reorient
Our goals of development
Development that doesn't pose threats
To the survival of human beings
On this beautiful planet of ours
To make it possible we need developing
New concepts of wealth and prosperity
That allow higher standards of living
Through changed lifestyles
Less dependent of Earth's finite resources
More in tune with its carrying capacity.

□

THE ISOLATED BEING AND THE MIRAGE OF LOVE IN FLANNERY O'CONNOR'S FICTION

Dr.A. Sreedevi and Dr. A. Venkanna

Flannery O' Connor says that man in modern times suffers from the absence of love. Her religious view of life enabled her to comprehend the true state of man in society. Her characters are deformed mad men and women, thieves, misfits, idiot children, false prophets and murderers.

O'Connor's characters have false prestige and set themselves not only above other human beings but above God. Love and compassion are very much absent from their hearts. With such a kind of fragmented vision, these modern people meet accidents, very violent and grotesque, leading to realisation of the ultimate reality- a reality that is full of love and understanding that makes them return to normality. O' Connor's idea is that the possibility of love is the most essential element for man to live a life full in itself.

The reason for the absence of love is described in some of O' Connor's tales. According to her, one of the reasons for the absence of love is modernisation of the society. The threat of industrialisation, the suffering of the consequences of the two world wars had left O'Connor notice man losing control over nature which in turn effected his consciousness. He becomes a psychic freak, as the pain increases in him, in the longing for love.

The modern family in O'Connor's fiction is a fragmented one. The family which is self-contained promises no security in an insecure world. Love between parents and children, between wife and husband or between other family members is always absent. They always eliminate themselves from God's love and also do not realise the importance of love that

should be given and taken. Love, the most important human characteristic that can be responsible for a happy family life is missing. Yet, a careful study reveals the fact that the family members have an unconscious urge for love. O'Connor hints at this desire for love, describes the causes for the absence of love and illustrates the bad consequences. O'Connor's themes are not only regional or American but universal too. She gives expression to the voice of all the lonely and alienated people of the world.

"The River" is the best known of O'Connor's story in which she presents love as central theme. The child Bevel moves away from a profane world where he can't get love, to a world he thinks, where he can find the ultimate solution. He is forgotten and not taken care of by his parents. People around him tease him and threaten him. He lives in a world of total disaster. Mrs. Cronin, his baby sitter, takes care of him but only as an employee.

Once she reads him a story "The life of Jesus Christ for Readers under Twelve". The child learns that a carpenter named Jesus Christ made him. He understands that Christ drives "a crowd of pigs out of men". From this moment on, the child understands the difference between love and hatred that is being given to him. Now he can distinguish between good and bad in human beings and this knowledge lets him go ahead searching for love. He finds it miraculously when he arrives at the river with Mrs. Cronin for the baptism. At the river, the child is completely in the milieu of sacred love.

When he is lifted on to the preacher's

shoulders, he becomes the center of attention. At this point of the story, O' Connor presents Bevel's yearning for love. He has already changed his name to Bevel like the preacher's, "my name is Be Vuul", he said it in loud deep voice and let the tip of his tongue slide across his mouth". (*Complete stories* 164). The child's mind now becomes pure and uncomplicated. He forgets the loneliness at home and is refreshed at the words of the preacher. He responds to the preacher's invitation wholeheartedly, "... to be washed in the river of suffering and to go by the deep river of life,"...in the River of love." "...You can lay your pain in that River and get rid of it..."(*Complete Stories* 159).

Bevel feels the comfort that settles in him with the compassionate words of the preacher. He is not ready to go home now but "to go under the river." The author offers spiritual solution for the child, who feels that instead of living in a world that gives no assurance of compassion and security to him, it is better to seek it at higher level, with the divine. O' Connor says that "Bevel's peculiar desire to find the kingdom of Christ" represents the working of grace for him".

Bevel's worries are over when he comes to the conclusion that "going under the river" frees him from all his worldly problems. "Yes", the child said, and thought, "I won't go back to the apartment...I'll go under the river". (*Complete Stories* 165).

The boy's suffering is caused by his parents who represent extreme secularism. They do not realise either the physical or the psychological needs of the child. O' Connor's characters vainly search for human love but succeed in getting the divine love. Next day morning when the parents are still asleep with hangover, the child takes some money for the

carfare and moves out of the home. He walks towards the river and is eager to go into it for he is impatient "to find" the divine world which is reassuring. Once in the water he does not wait. "...he didn't mean to waste any more time: He puts his head under the water at once and pushed forward.. " (*Complete stories* 160). The child drowns himself to find love. Devoid of love, the child's life in this world is painful. He seeks it in another world by dying. Thus, the research for love continues beyond physical life.

In this story O' Connor conveys a viewpoint that is complex and humane. She stresses the idea that "love is the most special brand of compassion that the human needs. She realises this need. She notices that his world is grotesque without a transcendent context as she says, "I have found that my subject in fiction is the action of grace in territory largely held by the devil".

She thinks that the world has become less hostile to human sentiments and religious sensibilities. As she says, "I keep thinking more and more about the presentation of love and charity..." O' Connor's stories are remarkable for their quality of love and grace. She is concerned with human life in the modern world.

O' Connor's fiction is gothic and violent, only superficially, the depth of her fiction is precisely to highlight the action of love. In her fiction, the balance of human and divine love is very important. All her characters recognise their need for love. By portraying the redemptive process, the author makes more explicit the effects of love. More apparently, she gives us a sense of God working through human agency. She explores only one idea, that love is a manifestation of divine in human beings.

□

MAYURAKKHI, YOUR OFFERING – A NOVEL ON HUMAN LOVE AND PASSION

Sumit Talukdar

Harsha Dutt's most significant and highly acclaimed novel is *Mayurakkhi Tumi Dile* (*Mayurakkhi Your Offering*). Here his creative talent reveals him as the most powerful novelist in the present generation of Bengali novel-writing. The novel speaks volumes of his superb craftsmanship engraved in unique style of storytelling and exceptional subject – matter. Among the other novels *Kushpatar Deul*, *Rajkanya*, *Vikarna*, *Margareet – Ai Suryalok*, *Asesh Karcha Tuni* etc this particular one has surpassed his all other creations in quality and popularity. If he did not write any other novel, he would be forever kept in the minds of the Bengali readers for this singular attempt. Harsha here has achieved the zenith of excellence and manipulated the whole subject as a skilled literary craftsman. From the beginning to the end the novel indeed has the captivating strength to hold the reader's attention for Bengali novel, there is an enriched tradition where Bankim Chandra's 'Anandamath', Tagore's 'Ghare Baire', Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's 'Devdas', Bimal Mitra's *Saheb Bibi Golum*, Tarashankar Bandopadhyay's 'Ganadevata' have made history and prepared the golden path for the literary descendants. Consuming that traditional past with heart's content Harsha's career has been nourished and matured. A beautiful blending of tradition and modernity has added to his creative works a unique style of artistic beauty. His style is obviously traditional but his presentation is modern. Moreover in 'Mayurakkhi, Your Offering' Harsha does not accept any western model based on magic realism or reporting facts of the latest fashion. On the other hand following the traditional method he has restricted himself to the root of indigenous social realism. He wants to make the same a real documentation of man – woman relationship rooted in our society. Through the

method of stream of consciousness he has delved deep into the romantic minds of the younger generation.

The central theme of the novel is love and with dexterity Harsha has shown how emotion eventually surrenders to passion. Here love means not merely the ordinary physical relationship but an eternal glorification through love – incarnate, *Mayurakkhi*. The novel first published in 1989 has become the bestseller. An intensive study of the text gradually unfolds the mysterious character of the heroine, *Mayurakkhi*. Symbolising the female image covered in the disguise of light and shade as generally portrayed in Tagore's several paintings she appears to her three male-partners – *Suncet*, *Hayat* and *Chayan*. Though they are good friends and students of Art College, they planned to possess her whenever they get the chance. But *Mayurakkhi* is not a woman of that kind. In this mysterious game of love she alone plays the role of primitive force and tactfully controls the hidden passion of her three intimate friends. Using Flash Back method Harsha gradually opens up the inner psychology lying deep in the minds of the four youths. They become involved in the recollection of their past life, their enjoyment of the natural beauty at *Mirpur* village, their coming close with each other, the quick passing of seven days and finally what they will carry away with them as something really memorable before their return in the stereotyped professional life. When their weekly trip at *Mirpur* almost comes to an end, that unforgettable night in the paddy field under full – moon shower they sit and get engaged in wonderful retrospection. In the background of natural beauty they gradually open up themselves.

After that they come back to their home-city in Kolkata. They try to forget their previous trip full of outward thrill and romance. Though there is

an underlying tragic feeling of separation and loss, they try to forget it. But Mayurakkhi cannot. Hayat's sudden death almost makes her life shattered and cumbersome with sorrow. As far as possible she remains silent and indifferent. Suneet, who loves her most, tries to console her and wants to begin a happy life ultimately marrying her. But in the climax of the novel Mayurakkhi confesses the tragic truth that she is pregnant and she had to commit this pre-marital courtship in the eternal embracing of Hayat because he was unhappy in his conjugal life and ready to commit suicide. She offers him new life and Mayurakkhi's offering is in the manner of eternal love and wish-fulfilment. Mayurakkhi has kept his word, but she cannot save Hayat. He dies suddenly in a confusion of either car-accident or intentional suicide. But she still feels her beloved Hayat within her-self and one day she must give him birth.

In a sub-plot Chayan, a little junior to Mayurakkhi was betrayed by his lady-love and decided to commit suicide. But as a symbol of indomitable life-force, she aroused within him hope of survival. Moreover, she is an artist whose only motto is to create not to destroy. And till the last nobody knows about the actual father of her child. Suneet cannot believe this incredible truth. He cried and asked "Why did you not abort the unwanted child? Whatever you deserved at last failed...." Mayurakkhi's quiet reply – "I did it informing you everything. But today this is quite impossible. I can't let Hayat die for the second time. He survives

in his own offspring. This is my only victory, my only gain of self-surrender". Finally Suneet accepts her as his own wife. This time they arranged a honeymoon trip as well as a permanent settlement at Mirpur again and forever.

So far as man-woman relationship is concerned the text reveals the truth that nothing can stand in the way of real love. Apart from Chayan in this triangular love story Hayat, Mayurakkhi and Suneet play the pivotal role. It never appears that Mayurakkhi is a symbol of lost virginity and unchaste womanhood for her illegal relationship with Hayat betraying her own lover, Suneet but as a brave woman who accepts a married muslim youth suffering from agnised loneliness without any racial prejudice. She knows very well that she may be refused by Suneet and rejected by her own Hindu society as a fallen woman. Moreover, her only religion is to love humanity with broad mind and a secular outlook. Harsha tries to convey this noble message of secularism. There is also a sea change in Suneet's mind in his liberal acceptance: "Suppose, this is my child". Even the background of Mirpur village full of natural beauty and old myths is also responsible to change the self-centered urban mentality of the four young people and gives them the ultimate chance to open up their hidden desires of mind and helps them unite intimately.

□

BOOK REVIEWS

JEWEL -LESS CROWN : SAGA OF LIFE By B.S.Murthy, Self imprint, F9, Nandini Mansion, 1-10-234, Ashok Nagar, Hyderabad. 238 pages. Price Rs. 150/-.

The novel is in two parts, Book I and Book II. Each book has catchy sub-titles : Artha and Kama, Dharma and Moksha. The sub-titles, in essence, reveal the theme of the novel. The novel deals with the saga of life. Man tries to reach the top of the ladder for the crown. But there are snakes, big and small, that pull him down to the bottom. Life, after all, is a game of ladders and snakes.

Gautam, the ambitious engineer, chooses to climb the ladder of life using the despicable but profitable way through flesh to wash off the vestiges of his humble beginnings. He involves his beautiful wife Sneha in the detestable game. Their only son, Suresh, grows up developing Oedipus complex. He witnesses his mother's sexploits in a clandestine manner and desires her. Spoilt child as he is and a rapist, he rapes and murders a young girl, Shanti. He is imprisoned for life. Sneha commits suicide out of remorse to gain retribution for her guilty life. The crown which the Gautams manage to snatch in high society is devoid of jewels !

In Book II repentance converts Gautam into 'guruji' in an Ashram run by 'swamiji' at Annavaram. Guruji now spends his vast and ill gotten money in establishing Shanti Sadan for destitute women. Suresh gets reformed in jail and is released after seven years for good behaviour. He meets his father at the Ashram as also Vidya, a beautiful dancer who manages the Sadan efficiently. The young things naturally fall in love. They have the blessings of 'swamiji' and 'guruji' to lead a sensible and useful life. They leave for Delhi to live in Misty Nest, the posh and sprawling residence of the Gautams of their hey day. Misty Nest of the murky days now houses the Kuchipudi Dance School run by Vidya.

In Gautam's rise and fall resulting in his enlightenment the dramatic twists and turns keep the interest of the readers. Gautam encourages **kama** to attain **artha** which in turn makes him to discern **dharma** leading him towards **moksha**. A saying goes that unless one is a *kami*, one cannot turn into a *mokshakami*. The novelist strikes a balance between the carnal and the spiritual in the novel with ingenuity. Gautam is transformed into 'guruji', Sneha wins peace for her soul at the price of her life and their son, Suresh the prodigal, plays the good Samaritan at the end. The message is clear. True repentance has its rewards.

The novelist introduces a lot of sex, psychology, legal wranglings, skills of entrepreneurship, maneuverings and such other ingredients in this materialistically spiritual novel offering good reading experience.

In the choice of words and expressions the novelist leans towards the uncommon for the simple which makes the style affected. The too frequent use of expressions like 'in time', 'nevertheless' etc. and the errors of different types, particularly in Book II, mar the narration.

The attractively designed illustration on the cover page is imaginative and symbolical.

D. Ranga Rao

TEJOLINGA RAHASYAM : Dr. KRK Mohan; Srimukha Publications, 101 Kanchi Residency, 11-19, P&T Colony, Dilsukh Nagar, Hyderabad; + 151 pp; Rs.80/-.

Dr. KRK Mohan is a well-accomplished, versatile, and highly ranked writer of our times respected for his literary work in both Telugu and English. He has numerous novels, children's stories, short stories, and more significantly science fiction... a theme rarely attempted by Indian authors, to his credit.

'Tejolinga Rahasyam' is Dr. Mohan's latest work on science fiction. The book comprises two short novels: 'Tejolinga Rahasyam' and 'Antharikshamlo Anthardhanam'.

The story is expertly built around science, espionage, and adventure. A secret agent, Jayanth, is assigned with an exciting mission, deep in the Brazilian jungles, to explore a mysterious object known to be rendering all physical matter in its vicinity invisible for the human eye. The primitive natives are superstitious and attribute the phenomenon to the divine powers of the object, which they believe is a manifestation of God. But the secret agent, well educated and fully trained, is conversant with the 'Kinetic theory of matter' and the phenomenon of 'Optical illusion' of Physics.... The scientific aspects behind the 'mysterious' behavior of the object. He finally procures the object and succeeds in his hazardous mission.

The author sounds his valuable message loud and clear to the young reader in favour of rational thinking against all superstition.

Antharikshamlo Anthardhanam:

The body of an ancient alien from a far off planet that got totally destroyed millions of

years ago, is discovered in a blasted cave. The alien was the foremost physicist of his planet that was technologically far more superior and sophisticated than our own. He wakes up from his 'programmed' sleep and narrates his tragic ancient past. At the end he explicitly expresses his unhappiness over the tension-some international situation on our planet, and takes off in search of another planet where he can, hopefully, find total peace and genuine brotherhood.

The story is clearly a satire on our ultra modern advancements in science and technology. It stresses on the mindless rivalry, mutual suspicion, and hatred between our nations, eventually leading to warfare involving liberal usage of deadly hi-tech weaponry, with consequent irreversible disaster and mass devastation. The author conveys a highly relevant and timely message of peace to the young reader of our nuclear era.

As is usual with Dr. KRK Mohan's stories, '*Tejolinga Rahasyam*' is yet another suspenseful and thoroughly enjoyable work of science fiction. Undoubtedly the book will be a welcome addition to the young reader's library.

- *Kambhampati Krishna Prasad*

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Several Money Order payments are being received towards the subscriptions of the members or renewal of the existing subscriptions, without any indication as to the Name and address of the subscriber or the amount sent. This is leading to avoidable wastage of time and effort in accounting correctly. Members are requested to kindly invariably indicate their subscription on Numbers and their names and addresses and the amount remitted.

-- Managing Editor.

READERS' MAIL

"The issue (Oct-Dec 2004) contains some excellent articles and poems. I particularly liked "Post Modern Literature" by Dr. Vinay Kumar Pandey and "Present Moment" by I. Sailaja Kumar".

- *K.M. Kale, Gondia*

"I wish you and all the members of the TRIVENI FOUNDATION a very Happy New Year".

- *V. Lalitha Kumari, Guntur*

"Triple Stream" is yet again a master piece (Oct-Dec 2004) bringing out the universal message of all religions and quite fittingly, the hall mark of humanity. Indeed, all scriptural texts advocate an underlying truth, 'Let Humanity be our Religion'. You, the erudite scholar, deserve full compliments. Next, 'Pleasures' by K.M.Kale, truly depicts the barriers that confront the progress of human being in his life. The more the pleasures, the more the sorrows".

- *P.V. Laxmi Prasad, Peddapalli*

"Your magazine reminds everyone of the power that literature has. As it is said, that a pen is mightier than a sword. The aim of literature must be to transform everyone of us both morally and humanely, as the world is in need of good literature".

- *S. Rukhmini, Kazipet*

"TRIVENI is really a highly intellectual and creative journal, full of intrinsic literary merit. To go through the Editorial, Book Reviews and Readers' Mail is an additional source of inspiration and delight apart from the articles, stories and poems by many upcoming writers. We feel truly privileged to belong to such a worthy journal and its family."

- *Bhavana S. Chari, Satna*

"Sir, I am a life member of TRIVENI and so are our under-graduate and post graduate Departments of English. However, I shall do my best in promoting subscribers for TRIVENI, the prestigious cultural and literary quarterly of India".

- *K. Sandhya, Vijayawada*

"GREETINGS OF THE SEASON, to you all as you are on the threshold of yet another year of disseminating the universal cultural matrix to the diverse readership".

- *Prof.D.Ramakrishna, Hanamkonda*

"I enjoyed going through Mr. D. Ranga Rao's article "Neighbourly Charity" very much. It is quite humorous and at the same time critical in the sense satirical and absorbing. His descriptive narration of day to day events with simple but beautiful command of language makes the article interesting. Prof. Chalapati Rao garu's editorial on Football has impressed me because originally it was football that was acknowledged as the royal game. The revival of its past glory is highly desirable and urgent".

- *Dr. C. Jacob, Narsapur*

"I thank you for the wonderful volumes of TRIVENI which will go to the future as treasures. Congratulations for editing such a precious journal".

- *Pronab Kumar Majumder, Kolkata*

"I liked very much the emotion-packed short poem, 'Sister' by Damal Kannan and also the poems of Dr.R.K.Singh and Mr. K.M. Kale".

- *Abdul Rashid Bijapure, Dhule*

"The articles written by eminent scholars and renowned writers are interesting and enlightening. I am enjoying reading them".

- *K.S. Sunder Rao, Hyderabad*

"We are really inspired by your editorials and lectures at various places. You are a source of encouragement, at this stage in old age".

- *Dr. E. Pullaiah, Hanamkonda.*

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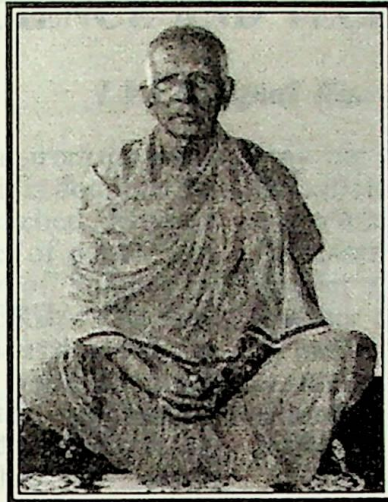
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R.I.P.



We regret to inform our readers of the Maha Samadhi of Srimat Swami Ranganathananda, President of Ramakrishna Mission and Math at Kolkata at the age of 96, Born in 1908, 15th December, he joined Ramakrishna Math at the age of 18 and filled many high positions including Head of the branches of the order-Bangalore, Rangoon, New Delhi, Karachi, Kolkata and Hyderabad.

He was one of brilliant exponents of Vedanta known for his prolific writings and spiritual discourses in 50 countries in Asia, America, Europe and Africa. He was a visionary, a humanist, and a deeply religious person in the tradition of our timeless scriptures. He was an outstanding interpreter of the Vedas, Upanishads and the Gita, a creator of new centres of learning and meditation and a bridge builder between all religions. He received the first 'Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration', for the year 1985.

We are proud to say that the Hyderabad edition of TRIVENI was released by him in 1992 at a mammoth meeting in the Vivekananda Auditorium of Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad, with his blessings. The Special edition of the Platinum Jubilee was released by his worthy successor revered Swami Paramarthananda.

THE TRIVENI FOUNDATION

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K. Ramakrishna Rao, of the

and literature founded "Triveni"

"TRIVENI" has been the

to Literature, History and Art

journal has fairly realized its

and culture in the past

to the world outside.

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Sastri, Jawaharlal Neahru

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Iyengar, Dr. V.K. Gokak and

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TRIPLE STREAM

ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

I.V.Chalapati Rao

Today mankind is suffering from too much rather than too little faith and it is doubt rather than faith that must be preached. Modern science begins with great acts of doubt. The motto of the Royal Society of Science in England is 'NULLIUS IN VERBA' (We take no body's word for it). Copernicus doubted that the sun went round the earth. Galileo doubted that heavy bodies fall faster than light bodies. Harvey doubted that the blood flowed into the tissues through the veins. They had each a theory to replace the old one. But as time elapsed these new theories too were found wanting. They are not accepted in toto. The new theory suggests that planets do not go round the sun in circles as Copernicus thought. Gravitation is a more complex affair than Galileo or even Newton believed. However unless we doubt and question, discoveries cannot be made. Einstein rightly said: "The important thing is, Don't stop questioning".

As Robert Browning, the poet said "Who knows most, doubts most". Gautam Buddha said "Don't accept any thing blindly because some great man has said it, or because it is found in a book or because the majority of people believe it." Lord Krishna told Arjuna in Bhagavadgita not to believe blindly what he said but "to reflect upon it, use his discretion and make his choice". This is the scientific attitude. Sir James Jeans saw science like a thought rather than like a machine. It is a temper of mind.

"Science is the continuous discovery of its own mistakes" as Gerald Gould has said. The 18th century complacently believed that it had at last got rid of nonsense. Whitefield wondered. "What seeming nonsense of today

may not tomorrow be demonstrated truth". Scientists set up a hypothesis and through experiment endeavour to justify it. They formulate their principles according to a system of trial and error. Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of the electric bulb, failed 900 times by making mistakes but he said, "I find out what is true and what is false. I find satisfaction of eliminating 900 errors and coming upon the truth".

Alexander Graham Bell was trying to invent a hearing aid for his wife who was partially deaf. He made mistakes and failed in inventing the hearing aid but in the process discovered the principles of the telephone. We cannot call it a fluke. Good luck is when the opportunity meets human effort which is earnest. Henry Ford who made the first car made the mistake of not putting the reverse gear! Columbus who tried to discover India, made the fortunate mistake of discovering America. It is scientific truth that the way to success is paved with mistakes.

It is sadly confessed by students of literature that all the romance of life seems to be the monopoly of the scientists. The adage "truth is stranger than fiction" is true though trite. Romance is no longer the property of the poets, novelists and story-tellers. As Bernard Shaw pointed out "Today scientists expect us to believe things far more fantastic than any poets ever expected us to believe and we believe them". The popular books in astronomy and bio-chemistry are the most imaginative and exciting works of literature. Most things mentioned in fiction like 'The Shape of Things To Come' and 'The Time Machine' of H. G. Wells are no longer wonders.

Based on technological break throughs the new millennium will unveil tremendous advances – Inter-planetary travel, double-decker aero-planes, flying cars and motor cycles, development of antimatter, conversion of sea water as fuel, almond size computers, Three-in-one (Computer, T.V. and Phone), revolutionary developments in robot technology, robots which replace servant maids and clerks and the possibility of a human being living for 140 years by means of molecular medicine and genome which help him to retain youth and energy. Cloning will be in wide use.

Of course it is doubtful whether a human being will have peace and happiness! "Modern science can grasp the tune but not the player", as a philosopher scientist has remarked.

Probability and randomness play a vital role in scientific investigation. In his stimulating book 'MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE' Sir James Jeans says "Every conclusion is frankly speculative and uncertain. We are not in contact with the ultimate reality". In his treatise: 'POSSIBLE WORLDS' J. B. S. Haldane avers "Every statement of a modern physicist is false. Many of our most cherished scientific theories contain so much falsehood as to deserve the title of myths". Today fundamental science is creating a doubt whether it is a reliable process of cognition. It is plagued with several short-comings – indeterminism, irreversibility, uncertainty, non-linearities etc. Prof. Planck in his book 'WHERE IS SCIENCE GOING' makes the significant remark: "Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature and that is because in the last analysis, we ourselves are part of nature and therefore part of the mystery we are trying to solve. The most penetrating eye cannot see itself any more than a working instrument can work upon itself".

The modern researchers, on the basis of

Sir J. J. Thomson, Sir Rutherford and Prof. Maxwell have stated with authority that matter and energy are but two different forms and shapes of one and the same thing and under certain conditions they are convertible. In the year 1905 Prof. Einstein propounded his Theory of Relativity. It explained every thing which Newton's Gravitation laws did not explain. He went to the extent of saying that if there was a creator of this universe, he must have been a mathematician. It was found that the universe was spherical in shape with four dimensions – length, breadth, height and time. He even discovered the relationship between time and space. Yet some of his findings were doubted, debated and challenged for some time.

Mr. Stephen Hawking the author of the best selling book 'A Brief History of Time' said, "In contrast with our intellect, computers double their performance every eighteen months. So the danger is real that they could develop intelligence and take over the world. We must develop our technologies as quickly as possible to make possible a direct connection between brain and computer so that artificial brains contribute to human intelligence instead of opposing it".

Kavin Warwick, Professor of Cybernetics in the University of Reading, says that a day will come very soon when man can communicate with his mind and get things done. He is a cyborg – half human, half robot. Difference between man and robot is reducing.

Indeed, Technology is growing into Frankenstein dimensions. As Bernard Shaw comments "If religion is an old superstition, science is a new superstition."

Instead of being used for alleviation of poverty of the downtrodden, technology is being used by the vested interests to exploit and further impoverish the poor. Technology is of

forbidding cost. It is harmful to the environment. It is a health hazard to the population. The worst thing is, It has become the hireling of politics and is destroying life and property by producing nuclear bombs and other weapons of mass destruction. Stephen Hawking asked in one of his lectures: "Is the end in sight for theoretical

physics?" What he meant probably is that science will come to an end as a natural consequence of the efforts of scientists themselves engaged in solving the intractable problems lying behind the natural phenomena observed in the universe. □

DAUGHTER OF GOD

Tommy F. O' Connor

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If God had a Daughter like He had a Son,
Would He modify His plan,
To be born in a stable?
Would her mother be a virgin
And with her dad take flight
From murder-minded soldiers
Pursuing infanticide?

If God had a Daughter what role would
She play?
Would She give her heart as Saviour,
And die that gruesome way?
Would She lead a woman's army
And be hailed as Queen?
Would men become disciples
And anoint her weary feet?

If God had a Daughter when would She
be born?
Would history be divided
As pre and post her dawn?
Would She face the world's problems
And challenge how they're caused?
Would her colour be a factor
Or the place where She was born?

If God had a Daughter like He had a Son
Would She be a champion athlete,
Or play music just for fun?
Would She thrill the hearts of listeners
With her songs of mirth and joy?
Or would She live unnoticed
Like when brother was a boy?

If God had a Daughter how would Her
work be done?
Would those at war ignore her
Because of where She's from?
Would all who care not for the world
Or for its forms of life
Scorn the woman's simple words,
Their truth to override?

Perhaps Jesus had a sister, maybe not
just one.

Perhaps He's had a million
In each decade since He Came:
The heart of homes throughout the world,
The soul of all who love,
Just waiting for the time to add
Their meaning to God's Word. □

AHAM BRAMHASMI

The Birth of Conscience

C.G. Vishwanath

Man has not appeared on the earth as a special creation of God. He has evolved from the lower beings from amoeba through the various invertebrates to vertebrates-animals with backbone(Phylum Chordata)-the lowest of which is the fish and the highest, the man. Till the arrival of the man on the scene, biological evolution has been going on in morphological, anatomical and physiological plane in all of which man has reached near perfection. Henceforth it will be in spiritual and moral plane. This is the dawn of new phase of evolution and the violent eddies due to this change in the order of things conceal this fact from the eyes of the majority. The transition from our ancestral animals still squirming within us, to man is too recent for us to understand and the ensuing conflicts which often seem disconcerting and incomprehensible.

True human personality surfaced from the moment speech was developed. Animal intelligence and instincts began to give way to a very different and specifically human form of intelligence. Next the most important characteristic of man is memory. Evolution could not have continued without memory. It alone is capable of building up conditional reflexes and instincts. The character which first differentiated animals from plants and gave the animal an immediate superiority might have been 'memory'. Speech and memory gave birth to tradition.

Man enjoyed a far greater degree of liberty than other animals. This was possible only in him and was sometimes the consequence of anatomical improvements. Development and specialization of the hand helped man to attain an upright position. It might have been only a trial like other trials in evolution

but this trial was immediately crowned with such success that two immediate gains followed: tools and fire. Articulatory speech which depends on the structure of the chin, memory and development of hand was a jump in man's superiority over the animal.

Upto the birth of conscience, the being who was to become the man, differed from his ancestors morphologically. He was subject to the laws of nature, to the laws of evolution. He had no option but to obey these laws. The moment he asked himself the question whether an act was good or whether another was better, he acquired a liberty, denied to animals. This was the birth of conscience. Science has not been able to explain its birth. Anyway that is of least importance. The important thing is that man and man alone the possibility of this choice has been transformed into moral ideas; a choice that was not available to other species. With this man took another jump and increased the gap which already separated him from other primates. When this occurred, the new orientation of his evolution was clearly indicated. Henceforth he must no longer obey nature. He must criticize and control his desires, which were earlier the only law. Writes the French biologist Le Comte Du Nuoy, "The purely human conflict is born from this permanent, bitter struggle which has lost none of its violence today".

However, man cannot liberate himself all at once. The weight of heredity, which goes back hundreds of millions of years is too heavy. Fluctuations which manifest themselves in individuals or collective regressions bring him back to animal.

When considering the majority of men we

start doubting the reality of moral ideas. Is the chasm between the man and the animal as wide as we thought? The only answer is that we are still at dawn of human evolution and even if one man out of a million is endowed with a conscience, it will suffice to prove that a new degree of liberty has appeared. Many important steps in the history of evolution started out as a mutation affecting only a very small number of individuals, perhaps only one. Similarly the moral idea must have been sparsely distributed and was in fact so fragile that instead of conferring a physical superiority upon those who harboured it, it contributed a hindrance. At the time of the cave-man, sentimentalism, pity, fairness, charity qualities highly valued today by mankind must have been a serious handicap to those who had to face the unconscious cruelty and brutality of others. Such brutalities have not disappeared in our own times. However, inspite of their weaknesses and subjection to ancestral instincts, the masses are responsive to the great virtues which have enjoyed a surprising prestige even though rarely practiced.

The new liberty given to man was necessary in order that evolution could continue. When physical support to the human body achieved a state of relative perfection, new trials in that direction became useless and evolution had to continue on another plane, the spiritual plane and progress could only take place by struggle, competition and selection. Liberty, therefore, is *sine qua non* of biological evolution. Liberty gives one freedom to use his faculties. As we rise in the scale of living beings, there is a proportional increase in liberty – development of consciousness, abstract ideas, self awareness and finally the birth of conscience. Liberty of conscience can naturally be bestowed on a living being who is in a position to use this liberty of being physically freer than others. This living being is the man. However, inspite of this liberty of conscience, man remains equally subject to the demands of the

body. By fighting against these instincts man humanises himself.

In what does the liberty of animal consist? It consists in very little. The fish is freer than coral or the starfish; the mammal is freer than the reptile. But all animals without exception are slaves of their physiological functions. Man is no exception as far as the animal in him goes. It is like an order from God to use these. They had no choice. What they do, they must do.

Progress in man in qualities, other than those in animals, does not solely depend on God but on the efforts made by each man individually. By giving man liberty of conscience, God has abdicated a portion of his omnipotence in favour of his creation and this represents the spark of God in man. Biologically we can say that God by his trial and error methods has brought evolution to the primitive man stage after ten million years and to expedite it to its optimum efficiency has entered the human body Himself to direct the evolution from inside the body. Thus the first spark of self-awareness and conscience developed in man giving him the liberty to participate in the progress of evolution like workers' participation in management. For the first time this animal- the man- realized that he is the master of his destiny and his progress depends on his own efforts, 'Aham Brahmasmi', and not on any other power's efforts from outside. The animal struggle against nature, against the elements from which the human form finally emerged after ten million centuries is transferred into the struggle of man against the remains of animal within him. But because of his conscience it is the individual alone who counts now as against the species. He will prove that he is the fore-runner of the future race, the ancestor of this spiritually perfect man. Thus Gandhi can be assimilated to one of the intermediary transitional forms, probably a million of years in advance of evolution. He

came to keep us away from despair and prove to us that our efforts can and must succeed. He died for us and had he not been assassinated we would not have been convinced. Consequently, any restriction to the liberty of conscience is contrary to the great law of evolution, that is, contrary to the divine will and is therefore 'evil'. Like the axioms in geometry any action/event contrary to the law of biological evolution is regressive and is therefore sinful and wrong. No one has the right to substitute his/her own conscience in that of another because progress depends on personal efforts and to suppress this effort is sin. That is what Lord Krishna taught of the theory of 'Karma' to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in the Bhagwat Gita which is based on the same liberty of conscience that man has received and must use it to his best advantage.

What happens in a big organization like a political party? Individual conscience plays its

part to a certain stage after which it is the conscience of the party, its collective will takes over. This collective will of the party depends to a large extent on its leader. The human flock obeys an obscure order. It cannot do without a leader. Sometimes it may be mistaken in its choice of the leader. The choice may be wrong. The leader it has chosen may be a rotten person. It is providential that these rotten leaders have been countered by certain rare privileged men, comparable to the transition animals who were far advanced of their times. These men constituted the mutants who were far more evolved than their contemporaries and had a great part to play, a high duty to fulfill, to orient the march of humanity in the path which leads them away from the animal. In spite of their handicaps, of the fact that the doctrine they taught was not pleasant and demanded sacrifice with doubtful benefits, it is Buddha, Confucius and Gandhi who achieved the highest honour and prestige in history and their doctrine outlasted and outshone all others. □

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

V. Lalitha Kumari

Modern man is caught in a cage
Or call it a metallic maze
No escape even for a sage
How it is let us envisage.

Man today on machine depends
Which in turn energy expends
When the turbine supply suspends
Man, his faithful sinews commends.

Our efforts for speed turn futile
If nature on us doesn't smile
For all our invention and style
Life leaps a while and limps a while

Buying machines is now a craze
So that one can sit back and laze
But it is a baleful bondage
Hope this rhyme has a clear message □

J. B. KRIPLANI ON GANDHIAN THOUGHT

Acharya J.B.Kripalani, in his "Gandhi- His Life and Thought" explained the difficulties in accepting Gandhi's views as expressed in the "Hind-Swaraj". In view of the great relevance of Kripalani's observations on this matter, let us examine his following quotation.

"Yet another great difficulty in systematising Gandhiji's thought arises from his making no distinction between the theoretically possible and what was practically so. In 1920, he talked of winning Swaraj in one year, provided the nation carried out the programmes he had placed before it. That a nation, with centuries of slavery behind it, would be able to fulfil the programmes was only a theoretical possibility. Practically it was not only not possible but not even probable.

"In his book Hind-Swaraj he has talked of machinery and the factories as if these could be altogether eliminated from the life of a nation. He also talks of doctors and drugs as if they could be entirely dispensed with. There are many institutions whose functioning can and should be modified for social health; but Gandhiji would talk as if he wanted their entire elimination and held that this was possible. It is a mercy, however inconsistent it may look, that he did make use of doctors and medicines whenever it became absolutely necessary."

"Gandhiji's habit of stating his propositions and plans as if they were practical, in any case in the near future, presents one more difficulty in interpreting his thought. He always said that the theoretically possible was also the practical. The difference between the possible and ideal must be clearly brought out to understand Gandhiji's thought. It is this confusion of the ideal with the possible that provides a handle to the critics who speak of his being impractical and utopian. It further makes his legalistic

followers rigid and fanatical. He would claim that what he had written or said was practical. When he asked people during the "Quit India" movement to "do or die"; he was asking masses of men to do the impossible. People do not do and die. But if the work they had undertaken does not succeed in the way designed, they live and try again. When in 1947 he said that "I, as the President of the Congress, must go and die in Noakhali and when some of his rigid followers thought I would do so, I could only smile. Not that I was afraid to die if the need arose, but to think that I was going to Noakhali merely to die was absurd. If I wanted to die, I would have chosen a more beautiful spot than East Bengal, say the Himalayas or Kashmir." Of course, Gandhiji laid down certain conditions which would make the ideal the practical. But his critics and even some of his followers deliberately or unconsciously forget conditions and make him look absurd.

Gandhi devoted one full chapter of his book to "Education". He was of the opinion that education must increase the moral fibre of the people. Education must develop character of the people.

In the chapter on "Machinery", Gandhi regards "machinery as the chief symbol of modern civilisation". He argues that "if machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land". He reiterates: "It would be folly to assume that an Indian Rockefeller would be better than the American Rockefeller". Gandhi was opposed to machinery as it would open a pandorra's box and lead to grave consequences.

In the last chapter of his book he reiterated the demand for freedom from the British. "Anarchy under Home Rule is better than orderly foreign rule", he stated.

Gandhi was of the firm opinion that "Indian civilization is the best and that the European is a nine days wonder".

In conclusion Gandhi reemphasised his commitment for the attainment of "Swaraj".

In the appendices to "Hind-Swaraj" Gandhi suggested some books for further reading. They included books of Tolstoy, two books each of Thoreau and Ruskin and one each of Shepard, Carpenter, Mazzini, Plato, Max Naordou and Maine. He also suggested Dada Bhai Nauroji's "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India" and Dutt's "Economic History of India".

In order to prove his point that Indian civilization has little to learn from the modern, he included extracts from eminent men of the West. The authors included J. Seymore Keay, M.P., Victor Cousin, Freidrich Max Muller, Frederick Von Schlegel, Abbe J.A. Dubois (missionary in Madras), J. Young, Colonel Thomas Munro and Sir William Wedderburn.

The influence of Hind Swaraj

"Hind-Swaraj" reflects the thinking pattern of Gandhi. However, in the freedom struggle, people from various backgrounds participated. Even some of his close political lieutenants like Jawaharlal Nehru did not share the enthusiasm of Gandhi as expressed in the book. Gandhi and Nehru differed with regard to the future course of India. Nehru preferred India should follow the path of industrialisation and modernization. The difference of opinion between Gandhi and Nehru over these matters came to the fore during 1930s and both of them exchanged a number of letters on this matter. They are available in Nehru's book "A Bunch of Letters".

The leaders of the freedom struggle

accepted the political leadership of a Gandhi and it is important to note that not much discussion took place on Gandhi's view as expressed in the Hindi-Swaraj.

"Gandhiji's thought then must be judged and evaluated on the own merits and not always on Gandhiji's arguments. The student must not content himself with Gandhiji's reasoning and his style or the words and the expressions he used. Like every great reformer his thought is greater than his words and arguments. Often his conduct is more revealing and eloquent than the arguments he advances for a particular course of action. In studying him, therefore, note must be taken not only of the spoken or written word but also of his life, the way he faced and met critical situation, organised institutions and behaved towards friends and opponents. His public and private life were an open book. Therefore, his writings must be studied along with it. The writings alone may not bring out the full implications of his philosophy of life, individual and social. Further, the student must rely on his intelligence, knowledge and experience for a proper understanding of Gandhiji's ideas, policies and programme".

The relevance of Hind Swaraj and Gandhi

"Hind Swaraj" was written by Gandhi in 1909 before he entered into the political and national arena of India. Of course, Gandhi gained great experience in the West- first as a student in London and then as a barrister in South Africa and also as a relentless fighter for the freedom and dignity of the Indians and the coloured in South Africa. His struggle against Apartheid and the nonviolent satyagrahas he had organised in South Africa brought him laurels both in India and abroad.

During his stay in South Africa he visited India now then. But he formulated his views in

"Hind swaraj", primarily based on his experience in the West and particularly in the context of basic human rights and human dignity. His knowledge about the realities of India was minimal at that time.

That is why Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the nationalist leader and educationist whom Gandhi considered as his political guru, dismissed "Hind Swaraj" stating that Gandhi would likely to change his opinion after working in India for one year. But that did not happen with Gandhi. Till he breathed his last, Gandhi,

more or less, followed the same stand as he enunciated in his books. They remained his views eventhough his views were not shared by the leaders of the political struggle.

Gandhi's constructive programme reflects many of the ideas expressed in the "Hind Swaraj". The constructive workers expressed their support to the views and followed Gandhi in this regard. The Sarvodaya and constructive workers even now express views which are similar to one in Gandhi's book.

□

TIME UP, ITS GOING, GOING

Dr. V.V.B. Rama Rao

Look about: look around and within
 The doting grand daughter doesn't rush to your lap
 The old and favourite file photograph frightens
 The mirror image that has kept flattering, bolstering complacence
 Throws a grimace and a scowl
 Mail gets thin-unsubstantial, inconsequential, anyway
 Ego is pinched and punctured
 Attractions wane—taste for spicy things kept on hold
 Only wishes to cling and live by
 The physician grows solicitous -gives a nod you don't comprehend
 His sigh communicates—but the ennui is not his
 Passengers grow kind, offer you their seats
 At least some out of fear—they'd get that day
 Some revere—they have children too
 Man at the bank counter shows a sofa to bring your cash to
 Gone were the days of flying kisses long ago
 Listening at nights to whistles in breath
 At departure the wife asks you not to take a bus
 Time up, it's going, going
 Learn to be your own physician
 Wearer, know where your shoe pinches!

□

TRADITIONAL WATER CONSERVATION IN UPLANDS OF TELANGANA

C. Sarvotham Rao

Telangana region with a geographic area of 1,15,000 sq.km. (1.15 lakh) supports a population of about 300 lakhs (2001 A.D.). More than half the area, (58,000 sq.km.) is above an elevation of 1000 ft., Mean Sea Level (M.S.L.). The cultivable area is about 27 million acres, of which more than 14 million acres are above 1000 ft. M.S.L. Irrigation from both Godavari and Krishna rivers is not possible because of this high elevation.

For centuries agriculture in these uplands was dependent mostly on natural rain fall. The average annual rainfall, varies between 800-900 mm spread over 90-100 days. Farmers in each of the water sheds constructed a chain of Tanks and Kuntas (Small ponds) one below the other (across the contours) from the ridge to the valley. Enough rain water was harvested in most of these water bodies to provide irrigation even for two agriculture crops. The extent of cultivable area under most of the tanks, or kuntas varies between 5 to 20 acres. Under some tanks, Tube and Irrigation wells were excavated and water used for cultivation.

The villagers concerned maintained these water bodies, under the guidance of the village officers. The silt was removed every year and the inlet and outlet water channels properly repaired. In 1955-56, a total area of over 12 lakh acres was under cultivation, under these village tanks and kuntas. After the formation of Andhra Pradesh, this age old system of irrigation was neglected, as these Tanks could not qualify to be included even under minor irrigation sources. No alternative method was put in place to desilt the tank beds, repair the inlet and outlet water channels and maintain the water bodies. The result was that many of

these tanks and kuntas were breached, or silted and even encroached providing no storage space for the rainwater.

The status by 2000-01 was that only about 5 to 10 thousand partially useful water bodies remained. The bigger tanks in the valley, could be maintained as minor or medium irrigation sources. However only about 5 lakh acres continue to be irrigated with difficulty under these water bodies.

Thus in the last 50 years, gradually over 7 lakh acres were lost to agricultural production, causing an annual economic loss of about Rs. 940 crores to rural economy (at Rs. 1,200/- an acre). At 10 mandays of employment per acre about 70 lakh mandays, of potential rural employment is lost annually. At Rs. 90/- per manday, a total of Rs. 630 crores of cash-flow into the rural households has dried up, causing immense social unrest and misery to rural population. What needs to be noted is that this employment opportunity was spread over the entire rural area of more than 58,000 sq. km. of these uplands. The loss of water bodies resulted in non-availability of water and cattle fodder, resulting in large scale migration of rural labour to urban areas, for employment.

Restoration of these tanks and ponds can once again generate rural employment and stop further migration of rural people. With political will, this restoration can be done with in 2 to 3 years and at reasonable cost, under the Food for work programme, where five kg of food grains (mainly rice) and Rs. 10/- cash, is payable per each cubic metre of earth work. Efforts should be made to bring 7 lakh acres

again, under agricultural production and restore the ecological prosperity.

These village tanks can provide drinking water and cattle fodder and improve the ground water resources of the rural areas. Most of the Tamarind, Neem, Babul and other trees, useful in rural economy, need to be replanted as almost all such trees have been gradually felled and removed over these years.

It is unfortunate that no purposeful efforts have been made to look into this aspect of the problems of Telangana uplands. There is need

to provide for future annual maintenance, under a regular system for these micro-irrigation sources, which form part of the rural ecology of Telangana uplands.

Note:

The area in 1955-56 under Major & Minor irrigation was about 2,83,400 acres in Telangana. After spending lakhs of rupees on new irrigation projects during the last 50 years only an addition of 4,23,500 acres has been made. Which is much less than the 7 lakh acres which went out of cultivation due to neglect of the administration.



AFTER THEIR BOY LEAVES HOME

Noel King

Joe insists the lad's Airfix Models remain hanging,
but gives away the tired out vinyl records,
the turntable going to a nephew just getting his teens.
Mary washes his left behind clothes,
doles them by

unworn to her nephews,
worn to Oxfam,
well-worn to a recycling bin.
Three underpants become dusters.

In his playhouse in the garden
he'd hidden child colours with black paint;
sat head bent under the low ceiling
plucking guitar chords.
Joe bursts the roof,
hinges it,
creosotes it,
making a fuel shed.

Mary misses most the sounds
from the mini amp. through her kitchen window.
It's out of place in the porch, waiting
for callers to view from an ad. in the local paper.
He'll buy a better model
when he gets 'his feet' in London, he says,
and promises, swears to them
he won't busk on the Underground.



ETHICAL VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Satyanandhan

An attempted definition

The dictionary meaning equates ethics to morals. But the dimension of ethics are many and whenever some one uses the term 'professional ethics' unintentionally he touches the philosophy of 'Dharma' prevailing over all other aspirations of an individual.

Still an attempt has to be made to define ethics in a simple but undiluted expression.

"EXTENDING TO OTHERS THE FAIRNESS YOU EXPECT FROM THEM" might be the briefest definition. But does anybody try to find out how fair he is to his fellowmen? Is it not true that an eye for an eye is turning the whole world blind? There is a popular story in Tamil about 'Ethical values'.

A king wanted to know the state of moral fear and honesty of his countrymen. His 'Raj Guru' came up with an idea. A seven feet tall brass pot was kept outside the palace. People were asked to pour milk into the container so that the king can have an 'Abhishek' of milk. On the specified day people were asked to stand and pour the milk without attempting to sneak a glance inside the pot. Since the pot was seven feet high no one would see the inside. Finally at the end of the day when the king inspected the container it was filled with pure water. Not a single drop of milk. Everyone had thought that his share might never get isolated and seen amidst litres of pure milk.

This, of course is a story. But what is the status of contemporary India?

We always look at the Fourth Estate whenever we need figures, facts and the trend

of public opinion on a particular issue. From late eighties till the dawn of the new millenium a newspaper was respected only for carrying stories from an 'Investigative journalist'

But what is the present day scenario? In July while participating in the first anniversary to mourn the demise of Late Sri. Dirubhai Ambani, the founder of the Reliance group of companies, Sri Arun Shourie, the most popular investigative journalist admitted that at one point of time he was after Reliance for violation of government norms where as now he finds those norms to be hurdles for national economic growth.

So the hue and cry made by many genuine but misguided worshippers of the ancient Indian ethical values that Kaliyug has set in and everything is going topsyturvy is completely misplaced and emotional.

In fact the Indian Society has always been very receptive and progressive child marriage and Sati have been banned and untouchability is now a crime. Now everybody has to accept it. Ofcourse still in rural India child marriages and untouchability have not vanished in certain areas. The government now atleast has the teeth to book the guilty. From what was once a much accepted way of life we have matured into safeguarding the rights of women and the downtrodden. The yardstick of the right and wrong certainly changes old Laksman Rekhas disappear and newer ones emerge.

Earlier wood was the cheapest and a fit fuel and building material, then it became costly and now in certain states cutting wood is a crime.

But now we face the most crucial question "Is there not a very wide gap between percept and practice?"

In other words charity does not begin at home.

I expect fidelity from my wife but I have an eye for someone's beautiful wife.

I expect a quality product with a reasonable guarantee but I sell substandard stuff. I hate a bribe. But am very eager to take one.

I choose the filthiest of words in condemning politicians who are power mongers and are corrupt.

But I never introspect how I behave amidst my family members, my community, my business associates and society as a whole.

At this stage let me take a look at the Fourth Estate in particular. While neutrally evaluating the role of the press I can conveniently place my perception of professional ethics.

Once in Tamil Nadu students were given free bus passes to go anywhere in Chennai to facilitate them to visit any library. In short students could travel anywhere free.

Feeling a lot of cash crunch in running the city buses a study was carried out to find out the percentage of students who visit public libraries. It was not even one percent.

The same is happening to the press today. The elite and a section of writers of high order and class always criticise the press for coming up with more sensational issues rather than social and crucial issues.

The press is criticised for its bias in some issues and often branded as having vested interests for or against a political party. Let us assume, I want the press to print only stories that are important and that might educate or guide the readers. I do not want anything sensational printed or blown up.

Because professional ethics means you tell the common man that these are the pros and cons and I also show him other options.

If I am a builder I will present to him not only a variety of costly construction plans but give him options of the cheapest with a strong foundation and construction.

If I am a lawyer I will tell him how far his case has solid grounds and tell him the time upto which the hearing might prolong. I would advise him wherever possible out of court settlement is the best alternative.

If I am a doctor I would not only give pills for malaria or worms in the stomach. I would make efforts to impress upon the civic administration and the general public for a clean environment.

If I am a film producer I will go for only picturisation of a story and scenes depicting high morals, ideals and aims. I would not show obscenity and scenes suggesting denigration of women.

So if I run a newspaper I would not carry any advertisement of items or services without which a man can survive. I will only cater to what is good for and what is needed by the readers.

Thus I have listed the expectations from a professional in terms of 'Ethics'. Is it pragmatic?

A Pragmatic Approach

Cursing the present Indian society for forgetting and compromising on ethical values from an ivory tower is very easy.

Advising everyone to take only technology from the West and not culture is also superficial. But all such exercises would end up in the same hypocrisy of completely ignoring the reality and trying to shout down the voices of dissent and the natural transformation of the social order, from time to time.

Today inside the family and outside, the morals are either to safe guard some comfort, gain and rudely prescribe don'ts for avoiding a complete break-down of a family or a business partnership.

This may not be the way an order of very high class is implemented. In other words people must extend compassion, respect and warmth. But people are united as families or business associates with the carrot at one end and the stick at the other end. An arrangement of convenience with the codes of conduct should be clearly drawn.

Why hypocrisy and why duality

Food, clothing and shelter are not the only needs of a human being. In reality everyone is secretly carrying the fear of survival and craving for recognition for a place in the society. This run for status and security at any cost makes one compromise on values.

On one hand I crave for some recognition for any price, that is any compromise and also want to lead a comfortable and settled life.

I can not spare my time, attention and

some money also on public issues because there is no guarantee of any return by way of fame, name and a seat of power. But I enjoy all pleasures within the limitations. I am morally sound. But please do not ask me to rise up to causes of public importance. All are selfish. Why must I dirty my dress and hands for cleaning the pond? Are there not thousands of others? This way, there is none for every one.

With hope and optimism

For writers who do not want to give up and want to continue their efforts of creativity, of art and through provocation there is certainly a silver lining of hope on two grounds.

One: Indians still love family life. Seperated parents and abandoned children can never become a way of life here.

Two: When Gandhiji was pushed out of a first class compartment of a train in South Africa he fell with his head down but when he got up the history of a self respecting nation took the first step to break the chains. Voices of sanity might be fewer and feebler but just like a spark of fire engulfing a mighty and thick forest, some or other society will debate as a mass with respect to values which were printed in a daily periodical or a book even though rarely.

Conclusion

Magazines like 'Triveni' which have the history of seventy five years of high class literature and still carrying on the mission are very rare. But such efforts and dreams for a better world of class and compassion are like links of a giant chain in the making. Slowly more and more would join to build a mighty chain that can move mountains.



INFLUENCE OF WOMEN ON MULK RAJ ANAND AND INFLUENCE OF MULK RAJ ANAND ON WOMEN

Dr. Pretti Kumar

This paper is restricted to a few stories and novels of Mulk Raj Anand. (namely, only those mentioned here. The word 'influence' in the later part of title is used in the sense 'to create' women characters. The paper is presented with an aim to understand women in a broader sense, not limited to written works alone and to further encourage such researches at a wider level.)

Anand is more interested in life than in art, and in art only in so far as it serves life. He considers "truly humanist art is commensurate with the needs of our times." He wrote, 'we had set out hearts, on our liberation and those of other oppressed people, whoever they were, and whatever shape, size and colour', Anand took up this fight for liberation in his novels in the early thirties and continued it.

It was a love affair with Irene in Wales that led to the awakening of the novelist in him. In his special preface to the second Indian edition of *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1951), Anand has given us a hint of the early fire and drive behind his first novels

Incidents that Anand isolates as having made the most lasting impressions on him -is the death of his cousin Kaushalya, aged nine when he himself was only eleven. It was difficult, he tells us to reconcile the idea of a benevolent God with the sudden irrational death of this innocent and much loved cousin. Anand claims that his spiritual awareness dates from this time. Equally important was the death of his aunt Devaki, driven to suicide as a result of her ostracization by an orthodox Hindu society,

for among other things, visiting a Muslim woman, Anand cites this incident as the origin of an anger that was to last through his life, an anger against a society bigoted by caste and class and a religion which supported its perversity. (Anand's humanism is more elaborate, more complex, and while one might accept that he had sources in his mother's spirituality and in these early experiences it took shape and grew in an environment, both in Imperial India and in Britain, that was finally determining of its form.)

Anand himself acknowledges:

All these heroes as the other men and women who had emerged in my novels and short stories, were dear to me, because they were the reflections of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth. And I was only repaying the debt of gratitude I owed them for much of the inspiration they had given to me to mature into manhood-when I began to interpret their lives in my writing, they were not mere phantoms.... They were flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood, and obsessed me in the way in which certain human beings obsess an artist's soul. And I was doing no more than what a writer does when he seeks to interpret the truth from the realities of life.

It is Anand's humanism, his fundamental faith in mankind, that has dictated his notions of what the goals of a social system ought to be and his belief that the novel-all art, in fact - is able to sensitize human beings and, ultimately, to enhance the quality of their lives.

"Man", for Anand, is most emphatically a generic term. Throughout his life he has boldly advocated the recognition of women as people, seeing them, in fact, as rather special people because of their peculiar fineness of perception and sensibility. Anand tends to view women as possessing more interiority, more sensitivity, than men and attributes the best in writers such as D. H. Lawrence and E. M. Foster to what he has referred to as 'the feminine sensibility'. Sympathetic to the historic plight of women and eager to see them emerge from the oppression under which they have suffered so long, Anand has welcomed women's efforts on their own behalf. He stated in 1973, that.... It's quite likely that the present Women's Liberation Movement, the whole revolt of women in the world, is an assertion of the feminine principle, which men have neglected and ignored and suppressed. Now, once woman is able to win her liberation, I feel that the equal but different situation of man and woman will become far more congenial. People will live together more easily... Women's Liberation is ultimately the liberation of man himself.

Such beliefs had been implied in Anand's writings long before 1973, and he had often brought sharp criticism upon himself in his own country for his outspoken and unorthodox stand against arranged marriages, for instance, in which the woman's feelings are not taken into account at all and in which the woman is almost never viewed in her own right as a person.

We shall find, accounts not only for many of the formations in Anand's work but also for the grotesque distortions that go with them. Thus a reviewer snugly observes: He (Anand) is as Freudian a baby as was ever born in English fiction of the twenties and the thirties (the birthrate seems to have fallen since), and his seven summers are hot with his physical love for his mother and aunts.

Mrs. Mainwaring, in *Coolie* is a woman of vast pretensions and no morals, and makes Munoo her rikshaw-puller and domestic servant (and perhaps something more as well).

Sohini in *Untouchable* serves two purposes firstly, she exposes the hypocrisy of the caste Hindus who are polluted by the touch of a sweeper but do not hesitate to embrace a beautiful sweeper girl for lustful gratification; secondly, she serves to bring out yet another fact that even among the untouchables there are castes and classes. They too are jealous of each other and quarrel among themselves, for example-Gulabo. The novelist does not idealise; he knows that there are both good and bad among the untouchables also.

(Anand once wrote (to Cowasjee), "About intellectual matters: Your letter, about Mrs. (Meeankshi) Mukherjee's meanderings, is wonderful, because it is pungent, hard-hitting and has paid due attention to her unconscious malice. I could not have said all that because I tend now to be a thin-blooded liberal. But it is refreshing to find how naturally one writes if one is honest and straightforward even where a woman is involved.

In *The sword and the Sickle*, although the focus is on Lal Singh, Anand's treatment of Maya reflects his recognition of her as more than simply the traditional good and submissive Hindu wife. As Anand himself has commented, "in the act of running away with (Lalu).. (Maya) has surpassed other women. She has made a revolution of her own, liberated herself." Moreover, a major element in Lalu's struggle to grow and to develop a mature and responsible sense of self is his gradual awareness of his wife's identity apart from his own and his increasingly enlightened efforts to live with her in a relationship of love based on equality and partnership between husband and wife. And it is Janki in *The Big Heart* not the

poet Puran Singh, who goes out into the world of Amritsar to carry on Ananta's work after his death. It is she, moreover, from whom Ananta had derived so much of his strength and moral courage.

In *Birth* the central figure of the story Parvati is sustained by her traditional faith in her hour of need. The story also demonstrates how Anand's best work reveals a deep apprehension of what is enduring in the Indian folk tradition. Parvati is a representative figure; she is traditional rustic Indian womanhood at its best.

Anand's respect for women and for their abilities began early in his own life. According to K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar 'From his peasant mother he doubtless derived his commonsense, his sense of the ache of Indian humanity, and his understanding compassion for the waifs the disinherited, the lowly and the lost. If his mother had been largely subservient to his father and if she had been often hurt by her husband's ridicule of her piety, she nevertheless had been assertive enough to go her own religious way and to practice her Sikhism with quiet but firm dignity. More generally, women in India had always almost remained behind the scenes, well out of the limelight, until the Independence movement when they boldly joined the men in the front lines of resistance against the British, the young Anand was aware that they had traditionally exercised a good deal of power and control in the home. Also, having grown up in Northern India in the Punjab, he was accustomed to seeing the Hindu and Sikh women going about freely than their sisters in the South. Whatever the sexual taboos that were operative in the North, there tended to be a freer mingling between the sexes and thus, perhaps, less use of women as sex objects'.

According to M.K.Naik, "the position of woman in traditional Hindu society is a recurring theme in Anand's fiction, and quite a few of

his short stories are devoted to it, bringing out both the tears and the laughter latent in the subject. Among these "Lajwanti" is perhaps most memorable. Here a motherless young rustic girl whose husband is away at college, finds herself a target of her lascivious, pock-marked brother-in-law, discovers to the horror that her mother-in-law connives at his doings; runs away to her father's house but is sent back; and in the end, tries unsuccessfully to drown in a well. As she is fished out, her plaintive cry is "There is no way for me ... I am...condemned to live." There are other innocents too, some condemned to die and some victims of callousness, cruelty and custom. The story "Naina" presents with deep compassion the psychological torture undergone by a young wife as she comes to realise her true position in the house merely - a lust satisfying machine for her oversexed husband, who insists on having his full conjugal rights at the very moment when she is shocked by the death, in an accident, of a workman outside. The theme is treated in a lighter vein in "Lottery", and the treatment is uproariously funny in, "Two Lady Rams."

Among the women in his fictional world, we encounter both rustic and urban types; and both the maharani and the beggar maid, the village belle and the society lady.

Apart from that, as an adult in London and later back in India, Anand became accustomed to women who were independent, productive, and free spirited. Beautiful, talented and intelligent, Anil has been described by Anand as 'a most remarkable woman'. Assistant Editor of *Marg*, director, of the new publishing house, and well known and active in Bombay, intellectual circles, Anil was very much an enlightened woman. Anand went to live with her, and she was scorned by many because she 'had the courage to go around and choose her own men'. In 1948, Anand returned to London to get his divorce in order

to marry Anil, but by the time he came back to Bombay, Anil, the victim of her own securities, had run away. The whole affair had caused a scandal among their circle and her departure pained Anand a great deal. Through it all, however, he never lost his sense of Anil as a person who 'could inspire a tremendous amount of work' and as a woman who had courageously struck out on her own.

Anand has expended considerable energy trying to instill in young women independence and self-esteem for e.g. Shirin Vadjiidar (his wife) and their common friend Dolly Sahiar. Some of his efforts are reflected in a volume, *The Bride's Book of Beauty*, he did in collaboration with Krishna Hutheesing, Nehru's sister, soon after his return to India. The book was designed to help the Indian woman enhance her beauty through a knowledge of the laws of health and the rules of personal hygiene. But the real message of the book was in part I, entitled '*The Bride*'. Most of this little essay is devoted to a brief history of the role of women in Indian society, from the earliest days of Aryans, when the woman 'was a responsible partner in... marriage, in no sense subservient to or dependent on, the will of the man' through the oppressive subjugation inflicted upon women by the priestly laws of Manu, including *purdha*, *infant marriage* and *sati*.

Anand uses the historical summary for the advocacy of his own views, which were advanced for many men- or women- in 1947. He speaks of economic independence of women as a means by which "the institution of marriage might become more honest." "If marriage be considered a healthy relationship because, at its best, it conduces to a higher degree of self respect, the economic independence of the individuals who marry... will assuredly give them a greater sense of companionship." Expressing the fact that "woman is able to do all the jobs that a man can do and does not stand in any need of

patronage from man" Anand holds out the hope that the future will bring equality between men and women. Such views even over thirty years later have by no means been universally accepted, and they reinforce the depth of Anand's humanism.

In one of his letters to Saros Cowasjee, he wrote...I shall think of an article, probably my newest on "*The Tender Moment*." I have also written an essay called "*Barbarism and Indian sexual Practice*" You know that every Aryan male rapes the helpless female in the arranged marriages of India on the first night. The cries are drowned in the music outside. And yet many of our Modernists accept Vedic rites at their weddings. This hypocrisy stinks.

The fullest fictional expression of Anand's advocacy of freedom for women is in his novel, *The Old Woman and the Cow*, published in 1960. This narrative is convincing and effective in part because the sympathy Anand evokes for young Gauri is not at the expense of her husband, Panchi. The latter's inability to keep up with his wife in her growth into selfhood is due to his own immaturity, his blind, unquestioning faith in the tradition-bound, orthodox Hindu views governing the relationship between husband and wife, and the pressures of earning a livelihood in a period of drought and famine. An orphan brought up by his aunt, Kesaro, Panchi is hard -put to deal with Kesaro's jealousy of Gauri or with the insulting innuendoes she levels against the girl in an effort to retain her own hold over her nephew. Panchi is torn between his natural affection for his wife and his loyalty to Kesaro. He can't get beyond the notion that Gauri is an extension of himself and that she should behave always, even under his kicks and blows, as the cow-like, submissive and infinitely 'good Hindu wife'. Towards the end of the novel when he and Gauri have been reunited and he has begun to comprehend the tact that his gentle bride had become a woman and secretly to admire

her strength and independence of mind, Panchi once more succumbs to the jealousy of his aunt and the groundless gossip of the village. She had, after all, lived in the house of another man. Panchi turns his wife way, but without understanding that this time she will not come back, for Gauri by now is her own woman.

Anand slowly and consciously prepares for the change in Gauri from being an extension of her husband to the independent adult she is by the close of *The Old Woman And The Cow*. As he has explained, "Sudden revolt would not be possible in Indian life, I didn't want to show anything alien to her consciousness...But the growth of consciousness in Gauri from innocence to experience is a very important purpose of that novel". In the early days of her marriage, Gauri had quickly come to know her husband and was convinced that, if she would only be patient and humble, she would win Panchi away from his aunt. However, Gauri in her struggle with Kesaro, surprised everyone by her spirited demonstration that the 'gentle cow' could, in fact, be assertive. Her first significant step on the road to maturity and identity comes with the circumstances that occur following her return to the home of her mother, Laxmi, and her uncle, Amru. As Anand later said, Gauri is betrayed by her mother, who sells her daughter rather than sell the cow, because of the cash-nexus involved, and in the village life, the milk is more valuable to the mother than the daughter.

Gauri grew more and more capable of love to the degree that she was able to forge a destiny of her own. And the Gauri of 1960 is a woman of considerably higher consciousness than a character like Maya, in *The Sword And The Sickle* of 1942. Anand had expressed that Gauri is a believable character, not a 'revolutionary woman', but an individual who has convincingly succeeded in becoming human and whole.

In addition to *The Old Woman And The Cow*, there are many pieces scattered through Anand's seven books of short stories that deal in one way or another with the plight of the Indian woman and with her struggles to be accepted as a person. As Anand has queried, "Why should a woman be human only as a slave of man? Why can't she be herself? That is what my peasant mother used to say." An unpublished story of his focuses sharply on at least one consequence of a woman being regarded as a mere object and is best summarized in Anand's own words.

"There is a young girl..... She is Very happy to get married to a handsome.....I've begun the story when she is dressing up in the evening. Then this young man comes and shows her blue films..., She doesn't take very much, and recoils She is violently assaulted when she thought he would caress her, talk to her or do some thing to woo her., And I register in a poetic aside the fact that she freezes up for life for him, that she can no longer be with him. This is called "Breath in the Mirror."

This shocking assault is more psychological than physical and in that sense holds significance beyond the Indian alone. Feeling, thus, for the situation of women in his own country and in the world and sympathetic to their need and desire to come into their own, Anand, through his writing, has aided Women's Movement. Similarly, in his role in the World Peace Movement from 1948 on, he has attempted to aid the situation of mankind in general.

Anand wrote to Iyengar in July 1961:

I am doing some village social welfare working order to integrate my love for the poor with actual work for them I never realized, as intensely as I do now; the reason why both Tolstoy and Gandhi chose the peasantry for

the devotion. After writing from many years about the pains of the people, I now feel that, for their sake, it may not all have been in vain. 'The Old Woman And The Cow And The Road' will confirm the poetic truth that the alleviation of pain and its exploitation are the only values given to our intelligentsia in the present time.

Finally Mulk Raj Anand's novels offer witness of India's agonizing attempt to break

out of massive stagnation and create a society in which men and women are free and equal, in which they can, therefore, live dynamically and creatively. They give testimony of a generation of Indians familiar with the best and the worst of the West and with the best and worst of India. It is the evidence they afford of the Modern educated Indian's struggle to identify himself and his country in the context of modern world society and to find roots that yet live in a mouldering heritage. □

BERMUDA TRIANGLE

An Unsolved Mystery

K. Krishna Prasad

Bermuda Triangle is the section of the North Atlantic Ocean of North America in which more than 50 ships and 20 airplanes are said to have mysteriously disappeared. The area, whose boundaries are not universally agreed upon, has a vaguely triangular shape marked by the Southern Florida (U.S. coast), Bermuda, and Puerto Rico (the Greater Antilles).

Reports of unexplained occurrences in the region date to the mid 19th century. Some ships were discovered completely

abandoned for no apparent reason; others transmitted no distress signals and were never seen or heard of again. Aircraft have been reported and then vanished, and rescue missions are said to have vanished while flying in the area. However, wreckage has not been found, and some of the theories advanced to explain the repeated mysteries have been fanciful. Scientific searches have revealed nothing to substantiate the storied peril of the region – wherever it may be. Boaters and fliers continue to venture through the triangle without event. □

A RECOLLECTION

C. S. Murthy

Partition of our country –a dreadful thing
To recollect- it wiped out clean
Many a family-blood-curdling
Events stared at faces soppy and grim !

Folk who moved as brothers – twin,
Instigated by fanatics mad
And self-centred, without remorse
Went to slit their very throats !

What a price, we paid for Freedom won,
Placating our Muslim brethren
With a home-land sweet, their own!
Blood-bath, Rolled heads, foresaw none!

Well, It started all in 'Pak'
Rivers therein turning red
Spread like wild fire, Stories dark,
And Retaliation feverishly burst.

In the wake of blood-shed worst
Immortal Gandhiji, deeply hurt and sore
Undertook a fast unto death
At 'Nowkhali' that brunt bore!

While many a family were torn to shreds
Some, in totters, could survive
And trekked out to towns distant
To start afresh a New life!

Ran across Nineteen forty Eight
One such victim at Jubulpur-
An old haggard of Tens Eight
Sporting a white Turban Pure!

Coat and Pants, loose and unpressed,
Wrinkled face, white flowing beard,
Sunken eyes and cheap glasses -
The face a sordid, grim story held!

He was a victim from Pakistan
With a well-set and fair living there-
Left all and for very life ran
To places promising and secure !

Sunken eyes there, but see the zest
For Life and the Self-confidence they bore
Made with a stout heart, living just
Blaming none, but holding guns.

To out-wit his fate and work
To re-live in the hosting land
Straight from scratch forgetting the wreck -
Much he deserved a helping hand !

Waving a pack of letters and cards
Writing for folk illiterate
Wandered for hours in Streets and wards
Reaping a river in harvest –it's a feast !

Such was the zest and, such hard work
And the strong will to succeed
Set them Wall to make a mark -
Green is the old face in my mind.

Still after many a decade!
Though he rests well in his grave
Has many a lesson for us to heed -
The zest, hard work and living fair and brave!

□

VAAHANA VEERA

Vemaraju Narasimha Rao

Ravindra Bharathi, that day, was jam-packed, brimming with people. After the then Director turned the national theatre into a Government function hall, it was very rare that the hall was bursting at seams like that. And, why not! That was the prize distribution function. All over the area were parked vehicles of all makes—cars, scooters, motor cycles and cycles and numerous lorries outside the compound. Blazing on their backs were slogans like, “Telugu Talli”, “King of the Road”, “Buri nazarwala, teri mooh kala” and “Maar muntha, chod chinta”.

The Secretary of the Committee was eloquently carrying on—

“.... and that is why, this is a very good day for all of us. We should be highly indebted to our Managing Director who conceived such a brilliant idea as this, which is of interest to all vehicle drivers.

“During the last ten years, the vehicular traffic on our roads has increased more than ten-fold. The number of vehicles has gone up so much that at some places it is highly difficult even to walk on the roads. As I was saying, our institution has decided to identify and felicitate suitably the expert driver and the vehicle- that may be any vehicle- with tact and speed and comes first unscathed through this chaotic traffic from Charminar to the Ravindra Bharathi and award him with the title of VAAHANA VEERA and a cash prize of Rs. 25,000.

“We have ourselves made arrangements to monitor the traffic between both these points from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon. I would now humbly request the Hon Chief Guest to do us the favour of declaring the prizewinner and awarding the prize.”

Shouts, catcalls, and whistles.

*

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*

The Hon Minister adjusted his throat, catching hold of the mike.

“Friends,

“I congratulate the institution and its management for coming up with this novel programme which aims to ease the traffic and speed up the movement of vehicles on our narrow and very old roads laid many decades back.

“On this occasion, I have an important information to share with you. Before I became a Minister, no, even before I entered the politics, I was riding on my bicycle with milk cans on either side -and in the front and back also- through our narrow lanes and bylanes. So, I am not unaware of the traffic problems that our city is facing. This gives me greater joy in announcing the winner.

“The winner-who inauoweered his vehicle from the Charminar to the Ravindra Bharathi, over-taking even busses, and lorries, cars, trucks, rickshaws and auto-rickshaws- and arrived fastest deserves our special appreciation. The vehicle is the cycle- our City’s very own vehicle! And the winner is the young, dashing and brave Chakrala Rajesh Yadav! We are all proud of his achievement!!”

The auditorium resounded with the shouts,claps,whistles.

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Yes we have entered into the 21st Century. And, we have identified the fastest surface vehicle of the future.

(Translated by the author from his original Telugu)

□

SPARK FROM A SMOULDERING ALTAR

(*Visva Roopa Sandarsanam*)

Prof. Sitarama Murty

"The Supreme Being, the One only without a second, (*ekam eva adviteeyam*), wills to become Many.

With Him *will* and its *fulfillment* are simultaneous. Whatever be the magnitude and variety of the contents of His conception, His *will* has such potency as to materialise it in all its fullness and splendour. This entire universe—the extensive earth, the majestic mountains, the gurgling rivers, the verdant woods, the numerous species of colourful animals and birds, flies and insects, the expansive seas of unfathomable depth, with rising billows floating foam, the over-arching sky with its brilliant planets and sparkling stars and pleasant celestial regions and horrid nether worlds—comes into existence. And finally—crowning this magnificent creation appears the human personality with handsome physical frame and features, invested with sensitive senses, a strong mind, a vigorous intellect, a mellowed heart and a live consciousness and a luminous conscience. God's love for this Self-manifestation forges an inalienable link with Nature as the Transcendental Supreme (*Para Brahma*) and with human beings as the immanent Lord (*Paramatma*). He clings closer to human soul, lodges Himself in his conscience to provide guidance to him in his life and conduct

Man forgets his real nature as the Lord's beloved offspring and falls a prey to the temptations of the world's glamour and indulges in greedy pursuits of pelf and power, suppressing the voice of conscience not to stray from the path of Virtue and Righteousness; and thus creates chaos in world order. It is then that the Supreme feels obliged to incarnate in

the world in a suitable form to destroy wickedness, to protect the virtuous, and to restore Righteousness on a firm foundation.

There are certain situations in man's history when the Lord while playing the role of a Human Personality in combating with forces, inimical to *right approach* to challenges, has to manifest His Divinity as the Supreme Being in all its magnificent splendour. Krishna is obliged to present His real nature as *Bhagavan* (*Saakshat Parabrahma*) on three occasions through *Visions Beatific -Splendorous Cosmic Manifestations* (*Visvaroop Sandarsanam*)

Lord Krishna arrives at the Kaurava Court as the Ambassador of Pandavas to plead for conciliation, to persuade king Dhitarashtra to concede the modest demands of Pandavas and thus avoid war, which involves bloodshed on a massive scale. But the king remains passive; and his son, Duryodhana flatly refuses the deal proposed and challenges his cousins to settle their claims in war. Not content with this denial, he arrogantly flings into air the prescribed code of conduct towards those engaged in embassy in the royal court. He considers that Krishna is a mere human being; and that he can easily manage to take him captive. He believes too much in his strength and power; he has vast armies to lend him support in his ventures; and he can easily manage whatever he wishes with ease, by employing brute force. Lord Krishna, on his own initiative, chooses to terrify those engaged in mutiny with the intention of shattering their arrogance by a *Terrific Manifestation* of His Supreme Divine Personality in its Cosmic Splendour. (*bheeshanam bheshananaam*) The

purpose intended is to cause discomfiture of vice and wickedness, to frustrate revolt against the Deity and to overpower Duryodhana's arrogant self-sufficiency. The entire court falls into a swoon including the perpetrators of this revolt against Divinity: Only those who believe in Krishna as lord incarnate, like Bhishma and Vidura and Drona withstand this paralysing crisis. Though they lack power of sight to witness this glorious vision, they perceive with devotional intensity the splendor of Krishna's Divinity. The blind King prays that he be enabled to see this Manifestation and Krishna generously grants him sight for the nonce. This manifestation takes place before the war, in fact, to obviate that catastrophe.

But what is the effect of this Manifestation on Duryodhana, the veritable personification of cursed *Tamoguna* in all its massive langour, and insensitivity to sparks of Divinity? He deems this act as another instance of Krishna's prowess in magic, in creating delusion for a moment; and continues his demoniac machinations against the Pandavas. The blind King derives no benefit from this vision; his infatuation for his son continues unabated. Duryodhana's misdemeanours suffer no check, no protest, from his father whose blindness to virtue, despite the Divine Vision, becomes an additional advantage to him. Preparations progress to wage the war.

Despite his offensive misdemeanour towards Krishna in court, Duryodhana makes a strategic move to mollify him by seeking a favour from him. He approaches Krishna to request help from him in the war; finding him immersed in sleep in his bed-room, he settles down in a chair placed at the head of the bedstead. Arjuna also arrives for enlisting Krishna's aid for his side and gets seated in a chair at the foot of the bedstead. As Krishna wakes up and opens his eyes, his looks directly fall upon Arjuna; and then as he casts looks on all the sides he notices Duryodhana. He extends

warm greetings to both the visitors and enquires their purpose in meeting him. They place their requests for help from him. Krishna is ever ready to grant favours to those who approach him, without taking into account their past records of amenability or hostility towards him. He puts before them two alternative proposals:

- (i) He will not arm himself with any weapon and will not engage himself in the fight;
- (ii) His Yadava legions fully armed, is ready to participate in war.

And he tells them that Arjuna will be given the option of choice, because he has seen him *first* and also because he is the younger of the two. Duryodhana sees that Krishna is playing his usual mischievous trick in giving priority of choice to Arjuna; for, only a fool will choose the first alternative of having an unarmed Krishna on his side. But Arjuna prefers to have Krishna, as he believes that he is God-incarnate and that his mere presence on his side, his counsel and guidance, are more potent than the armed contingents. Duryodhana, who believes in superiority of numbers of fighting forces is mightily pleased to have the Yadava legions to help him in the war. He cavils at Arjuna's stupidity in his preferential choice.

The hostile forces assemble in the vast plains of Kurukshetra to try their strength—eleven legions of warriors on Kaurava side ranged against seven legions on Pandavas. As the battle is about to begin, Arjuna urges Krishna, his charioteer, to drive the chariot to the forefront and makes a review of the enemy forces. He notice among them revered personalities and preceptors—Bhishma, Drona, Asvathama and his cousins. He feels miserable that he has to wage a relentless battle against those who are dear to him; his heart sinks; depression holds him under sway; he drops his bow and arrows and declines to fight. Arjuna

seeks advice and guidance from Krishna. Krishna deprecates this sudden development in a hero of repute, who has faced several hostile forces in the past. He encourages him to do his duty as a Kshatriya; to fight evil forces and restore order as an inescapable obligation. He clears Arjuna's doubts with an elaborate exposition of the tenets of Dharma and its implications: *Bhagavad Gita* is the result. During this discourse, Arjuna, who has complete faith in Krishna as the Supreme Incarnate, prays that he be blessed with a Vision of his Divinity. Krishna tells him that even seasoned sages, savants, yogis and saints cannot bear to see its splendour; and imparts a divine glow to his eyes to make them capable to look at this Beatific Cosmic Manifestation. Krishna's purpose is to eliminate Arjuna's self-distrust and waywardness of will, to stimulate him to action with detachment from its consequences, to eliminate his inopportune lapse into *sattva guna* at a time when *Rajo guna* should predominate. This Beatific Vision presents all the vast and varied richness of the entire concrete universe, with nothing outside, and the panorama of events, past, present and future. It projects a gargantuan cavernous mouth sucking in the armies of both sides including Bhishma, Drona and other heroes of repute. The result is a fresh witness to the glory of God - head; and Arjuna makes a plea to Krishna to withdraw this Vision. He now realises how he has thought low of himself, how he has believed too little of his prowess, how he has degenerated into a moral weakling through casuistry. Now he has regained his strength; he can now assert with determination that Krishna is the Lord in whom he reposes trust as his Refuge and Guide. He gets ready to fight the enemy.

After the conclusion of the war, with Pandavas securing the victory Krishna leaves for Dwaraka, and on his-way visits the Hermitage (Ashram) of Sage Udanka. Udanka is an adept in spiritual quest; he has reached

the heights of self-realization by intense and devout meditation. He looks at the disorder prevalent in the world and becomes upset. His strong disposition composed of *sattva guna*, serenity in all its abundance, gives way to despair. He feels miserable and expresses misgivings about the workings of Divine government. He makes an earnest appeal to Krishna to remedy the situation and present his real nature as the Supreme Being. Krishna feels sad that Udanka has unfortunately suffered a lapse from his natural sobriety (*sattva guna*) and came to a wrong judgment about Providential Working. This is an occasion for Krishna to display his Cosmic Manifestation in all its splendour to assure the sage of the prevalence of Moral Law, despite apparent contradictions on the surface. "God is in His Heaven and all is right with the world." After witnessing afresh this Manifestation of God's Glory (*mahima*) the sage regrets how mistaken he was in usurping the seat of judgment and denouncing world-order by too much belief in appearances.

To conclude

The first time Krishna presents his Divine Cosmic Manifestation in all its splendour is on his own initiative (*suo motu*) with the purpose to strike *awe* in Kaurava court and frighten Duryodhana and his ilk not to think lightly of God, not to indulge in vice and wickedness, not to depend entirely on brute force.

It is in response to the request of Arjuna, that Krishna projects his Cosmic Manifestation a second time to enable him to witness God's glory and thereby enlighten his will to control its waywardness and to aid him in his resolve to do his prescribed duty without regard for its consequences

Again, the third occasion for displaying his Cosmic Manifestation arises to correct sage Udanka when he lapses from *Sattva guna* and,

To accomplish this illumined state of serenity, steady and sturdy faith in Providential design and a gracious belief in the Supreme Lord is essential.

How idyllic is it really
to live in an idyll?
Can we find there, in the hearts,
just a southern, warm place,
one in brilliant sunshine,
or is there also one with northern cold,
full of hatred and slyness?
Do not the dancers crush
their mutual hopes underfoot
along their Pas de Deux?
Can even the blind lead others,
because the paths are even anyway?
And is not all this laughing there
followed by a flood of tears?

THE ROLE AND POWER OF MEDIA IN INDIA

M. Ramakrishnayya

In this article, the word media will cover both varieties, 'print and electronic'. Although several important publications of the first kind have gone on line and thus joined the second kind, the roles and power of the two kinds remain somewhat different in terms of their influence and impact.

The print media consists of daily newspapers, weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly magazines and specialised journals devoted to different disciplines and arts. The readership of the last category being restricted, by and large, to the practitioners of those disciplines, their direct impact on the general public is rather limited. Of course, important discoveries or innovations highlighted in these journals find their way through special columns or reports into the other two kinds of print media. It is, therefore, proposed to concentrate on the first two kinds in our quest to understand the role and power of the media.

The second category of print media includes magazines like *Triveni*, which to my mind are primarily meant to provide opportunities for self expression by academics and other intellectuals. Those who by their nature burst into poetry or wish to share their new-found understanding of ancient lore or their own interpretation of known facts are serviced by these magazines. There are, of course, other magazines which aim to provide news and other information in a capsule form along with some analysis or even to entertain the readers with juicy tit-bits on personalities in the public eye. Some are attractively illustrated in recognition of the power of pictures. Some seek to influence the readers' way of life, to spread fashions and to advertise selected products under the guise of imparting

information, knowledge and advice. The readers are well advised to guard themselves against the hidden messages behind the attractive pictures while judiciously profiting from the information purveyed.

It is the first category, the news papers, that deserve most of our attention during a discussion of the role and power of media. The National Readership Survey (NRS), 2002 says that there are 180 million-adult readers of all publications in India, 70% of them being 'light' readers as contrasted from 'medium and heavy' ones, and that of these, daily news papers claim 156 millions, NRS also revealed two startling facts: (a) 48% of the readers live in rural areas; and (b) several Indian language papers have achieved dynamic growth e.g, Hindi papers accounting for 43.26% of daily circulation against 13.28% of English papers.

NRS-2002 has also brought out the impressive growth in the clientele of the electronic media. Television, terrestrial and satellite, is shown to have entered 81.6 million homes and to be serving 384 million viewers. Radio which has remained a state monopoly till recently, with a notional coverage of 99% of the geographical area, has shown a surprising decline in the number of its users due to the initial impact of TV. It is expected to regain lost ground after the fading of the novelty factor, with the entry of private broadcasters in the FM band and with the introduction of innovative programmes by AIR.

The new electronic media based on internet and personal computers has recorded its presence in NRS 2002, with 6.02 million viewers as against 1.4 million in 1999. However, its impact continues to be marginal, as most of

the viewers have to depend on the cyber cafes and leave their homes for using it.

Having noted the main players in the Indian media scene, we may consider their roles. These are six fold:

- (a) purveying information along with analysis;
- (b) investigating selected events critically;
- (c) educating the public on all kinds of matters;
- (d) Setting the agenda for democratic debate;
- (e) propagating chosen view points; and
- (f) entertaining the public.

Some or these functions overlap.

In discharging function (a), media persons are required by their unwritten ethical code to adhere to truth. Truth being multifaceted, information purveyed must be factual, accurate, and complete. The correspondent must verify, consciously anticipating the likelihood of error. Media persons may speculate but avoid the pitfall of baseless or motivated speculation. Functions at (b) and (d) put the media often in an adversarial position to the establishment, for example Bofors, Tehelka, Fodder scam in Bihar and misuse of food-for-work programme in Andhra Pradesh, etc. While investigating, very high ethical standards have to be observed. Otherwise, media is likely to suffer loss in credibility. For example, the deployment of call girls by the Tehelka operators has thrown a cloud over their otherwise commendable operations.

Function (d) has been hailed as highly beneficial. Prof. Amartya Sen, the Nobel Laureate has drawn attention to the role of free Indian media in preventing acute distress during famines and contrasted it with the experience in China where media was not so free. Recently

Prof. John Dreze of the Delhi University, and his group have highlighted starvation among the tribals of Kalahandi in Orissa for setting the agenda for utilising the mountain of food stocks for public distribution among the families below the poverty line (BPL). The negative effects of the Chinese policy of suppressing information on the outbreak of SARS may also be noted in this context.

Function (e) has a salutary effect if equal opportunities are provided by the media for debating the different points of view. In recent times the Ayodhya question, the origins of the Vedic people (Aryans), and some other issues of historical interpretation have been frequently commented upon in the media.

Function (f) has the tendency to spread objectionable habits or practices, particularly among the youth. Explicit sexual scenes, titillating dialogues, and exhibitionist violence mislead young and uninstructed minds to emulate. Several instances 'of crimes such as theft and murder have been reported as having been inspired by media presentations. Internet, in particular has been held guilty of misguiding the youth through chat sessions and pornographic displays. There is as yet no satisfactory method for safeguarding adolescents against these undesirable influences.

It is well known that in democratic societies, media is often referred to as the Fourth Estate and placed alongside the Executive, Legislative and Judicial arms of the state, so as to signify its power. Some effects beneficial and otherwise, of the power of media have been noted in the earlier paras. In addition, we may take note of the role played by media, in regard to the Gujarat riots of 2002. The English-speaking media highlighted the complicity of the state agencies and characterised the events as genocide, while the Gujarati media played down these aspects. It

is still a moot point whether the two contrary presentations have helped to improve the ground realities to any extent. Readers are no doubt familiar with the picture of a Muslim tailor put out in the press and on the TV at the national level to bring out the terror experienced by the Muslim community. We are also familiar with the fact that as a consequence of the publication of this picture, the unfortunate tailor had to migrate to West Bengal for starting afresh peaceful life. Media's power to do good or ill is indeed great. Every exposure in the media does produce good as well as bad consequences for the society at large.

What is the public perception of media's role and power? In a recent lecture, N. Ram of the Hindu quoted E.B. Lambeth, the media scholar of U.S.A., as saying: "Accumulated distrust of the news media, scepticism of journalists' ethics, and a resentment of media power are very nearly permanent features of the contemporary American scene." Ram, however, affirmed that "the public's perception of media power and its use in India seems to be a lot less negative", although he admitted that his statement was only impressionistic and not based on an empirical study. He also noted with approval the observation of Prof. Prabhat Patnaik of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi that "the power of the media as an institution has gone down greatly in India in the nineties". According to the learned professor, erosion of power was noticeable in regard to

issues relating to the poor and the suffering and matters of humane values on which the media chose to strike out on its own. He found that media continued to be powerful on economic issues, particularly those in respect of which it is, 'on the same side as international finance capital'. There are of course, honourable exceptions. To my mind, it appears that although there are elements of truth in Prof. Patnaik's formulations it is not correct to ignore the impact of the initiatives of some media agencies in regard to starvation deaths in tribal areas, dowry-related incidents, problems of minorities etc. in which the interest of 'international finance capital' appears to be nil or at least, marginal.

To conclude, the power of media depends in the main on the manner in which it exercises the freedom guaranteed to it by the Constitution in performing the six functions listed earlier. Adherence to truth, balanced reporting, respect for justice and other humane values, acceptance of social good as the lodestar, in short recognition of social responsibility is the main pre-requisite for media to be powerful. Questions like ownership, the source of finance, dependence on advertisement income do influence the capacity of media instruments to adopt and practice the above salutary principles. How a particular media instrument will achieve an equilibrium amidst the opposing forces will have to be left to the future with mixed feelings of hope and despair. □

THE HUMAN SOUL

With its twenty four Thathvaas

Dr. V. Seshagiri Rao

Any soul, to express itself requires a body, be it a virus, a bacterium, an amoeba, a fish, an amphibian or a mammal. The viruses cannot be seen by an ordinary light microscope but require an electron microscope to observe their structure and each has a structure of its own. But bacilli (of tubercle etc.) can be visualized under the ordinary microscope, after proper staining with dyes. It looks as if a primitive thought process exists in all the animate things, be they unicellular or multi-cellular. This thought form is confined to intake of food, procreation, when the environmental factors are congenial and death when these are not favourable. However, one can find even in some unicellular forms of life, a thought of going into an encysted state, when adverse atmospheric conditions prevail, so that they could multiply once again when favourable conditions return. This really forms the mystery of life. The question that arises in the inquiring mind is, whether, thought is responsible for the creation of an animate world. The next question that crops up is, whether desire is responsible for the evolution of various types of bodies for the soul to express itself. The answer is a probability. The next question,—“Is a Divine Thought responsible for the creation of this Universe?”

When one looks at the National Geographical Channel, or the Discovery Channel on the T. V. specially, when the depths of the Oceans are presented, it looks something wonderful, and mysterious to observe so many varieties of fish, small, big, coloured and having all the rainbow colours printed on their scales. Some of the very big varieties, the sharks and the whales look like live ships prodding the depths of the ocean. Next, we can see the mammals of the ocean,

the dolphins, seals and walruses. Among the mammals the dolphins, can be tamed and trained because, their mind with an advanced thinking, seems to respond to the commands given. They seem to enjoy the company of human beings. Now, coming to the stage of seals and walruses, already the front limbs are formed, though, the rear limbs remain like flaps for swimming, resembling the fins of the fish. One would be inclined to think that life must have started in water and gradually evolved till it reached the human form, passing, through several intermediary stages, the chief of them being the stage of primates. Similarly from the stage of planktons, the vegetative life seems to have evolved into a variety of trees.

During the stage of evolution of the Human Being, several structural changes have taken place in the animal body. The tail disappeared and the Humans became, — “Vaala- Khilyaas” or, Mammals without tails. The walk on the four’s got transformed into walk on the two’s. (legs) with an erect gait. Vision has taken the upper hand and the visual brain extends from the eyes in front, right to the back of the skull where the occipital cortex of the brain with a special area called the striate area, is present. This striate area of the brain, computerizes and integrates all the visual impulses that come to the region and takes the major part in the functioning of human thought. However, the motor and the sensory parts of the brain, remain close to one another, separated by a central fissure. The olfactory and the gustatory (taste) parts of the brain get submerged to the lower surface of the brain, to a small area, called the amygdaloid nucleus. This olfactory brain is the one, most developed in the insects which gives them the direction, either for movement or for flight.

The hearing part of the brain, goes to the temporal cortex fairly big with a predominant role to perform in the daily functioning of the body though in a way inferior to the canine brain in its range of hearing. A separate whistle to blow and call a pet dog is given the name, "Dog Whistle." The note of this whistle cannot be heard by the ear of the humans showing, that our ears cannot hear the range exceeding 18000,— cycles per second, of sound vibrations, where as the same can be heard by the dog. Some of the flying mammals like the bats, travel in the sky by using ultra-sound. By these facts one can understand, how many structural changes have taken place in the functioning of the Human Body by evolving to the stage of Vaala Khilyas, or Mammals without tails.

Hindu Philosophy, talks of the twenty four Thathvaas, with which the Soul takes the Human Body. They are given the names as follows:-

Five Karmeindriyams and their five centres in the brain:- $5 + 5 = 10$.

Five Jnaaneindriyams and their five centres in the brain:- $5 + 5 = 10$.

Anthah(:) Karana Chathushtayam, or the four internal Instruments by which the Soul functions. = 4.

Total = 24.

The Five Karmeindriyams:-

Vaak, or Speech, along with the mouth with the internal organs like teeth tongue, palate the cheeks, pharynx and larynx or voice box. -1

Paanow:- The two hands to hold, or for prehension. -2

Paadow:- The two feet to walk, or for locomotion. -3

Upastha:- The urethra with its meatus for excretion of Urine. -4

Paayou:- The anus with its excretory function of expelling Faeces. -5

Vaak, or Speech is given the status of a Karmeindriyam, or an instrument to perform an action. The various organs of the mouth take part in modulating the sound. Phonation is then converted in to articulation. Phonation is present in all the animals but, articulation or, speech has become the prerogative of the human species. Besides, the mouth is also intended to chew and swallow food.

Four types of Vaak are described in Hindu thought.

They are:- Para, Pasyanthi, Madhyama and Vaikhari.

Para Vaak:- is a part of, OM.- (AUM. } from which the entire audible world of sound has come into existence, or it can be called the sound of Divine which Sages and Rishies only can comprehend.

Pasyanthi:- is the sound which we see coming from different creatures of animate world.

It looks as though, the insect world also has a mode of communication by sound, the proof of which is found in the sound produced by grass hoppers and the like.

Madhyama:- is the thought confined within one's own self and speech comes out when one is required to express one's thought.

Vaikhari:- Different people of different nationalities have their own phonation to express their ideas in speech form.

The hands have a centre in the brain, called the Motor Cortex and it may be interesting to note that the thumb of the hand has a greater area or representation in the brain very close to the speech centre in the frontal

lobe of the brain. This speech centre in the frontal lobe of the brain is called, Broca's area.

The legs, and the organs of excretion for urine and faeces have their respective centres in the brain. Thus, the ten Thathvaas pertaining to the Karmeindriyaas are explained.

Similarly, for all the Jnaa-neindriyams or the five special senses, there are centres in the brain. The centre for vision is located in the striate area of the occipital lobe of the brain. The centre for sound is located in the temporal lobe of the brain. The centre for smell and taste, is confined to a very small area in the base of the brain, called the amygdaloid area. The centre for touch fairly wide, is found behind the central fissure in the brain in close proximity to the motor part of the brain behind the central fissure.

Now, some thing should be known about this Anthah(:) Karana Chathushtayam, or the — four internal instruments through which the Soul functions. They are given the names of .

Manah(:) = Mind.
Buddhi = Intellect
Ahankaaram = Ego.
Chith. tham = Reaction.

Though, Mind is the name given to several of our thoughts and actions, when taken in a strict sense, it means the screen of the Soul on which several impulses fall. They may be from without from all the five special senses or from within, from our own thoughts.

A simple example is given to know about Mind. We go in the night bare-footed and trample on some thing and jump suddenly. Till the action of jumping it is Mind. Buddhi analyses and conveys to the Ego, that it is just a rope. The reaction of jumping is called Chith. tham. Thoughts of varied form are present in all individuals. Children and often even some

elderly people also talk within themselves while walking. During the wakeful period of life, these thoughts, or Chith tha Vruth.thies, as they are called in the words of Yoga Philosophy, are like whirl pools in a fast running river. When these Vruth-thies, take an abnormal form without proper analysis from Buddhi, persons suffer from hallucinations and delusions leading to mental disease some times even with violence.

Now, Impulses on the Mental Screen, called Mind -analyzed by Buddhi, -conveyed to the -Ego, or Ahankaaram, -leading to Chith. tham or Reaction. These are called the four internal instruments of the Human Soul.

This is just a simplified presentation of the so called, Anthah(:) Karana Chathushtayam. Buddhi means several other faculties, associated with analysis as to, which is wrong and which is correct, which is good and which is bad, which is proper and which is improper and like that so many forms of critical analysis come under its domain. In an intelligent person all the emotions to which the person is subjected to, are corrected by Buddhi, and reactions also are controlled. The Intellectual is a Buddhi-man. Buddhi also means, the creative faculty. This faculty is present in some persons right from birth. Some become great mathematicians even from birth. Some become great musicians. Some become great scientists and so on.

Having evolved from the animal to the Human level, we cannot escape the nature of the animal in us. Depending on birth (genetic-wealth), environment, education, monetary well-being, influence by great Souls or Mahaathmaas, one can reduce one's animal element, slowly from a higher to a lower level. Of all things, birth or genetic wealth plays a very great role in the nature of an individual. To be born in an affluent and cultured family both from the side of the mother and the father, is really a great opportunity for an individual

and such a one is born in this world with advanced increments. There is tendency to preach in the present day, that all people are born equal. This is absolutely wrong. All are not born equal. We can give only equal opportunities for all and it is up to them to utilize those opportunities to reach higher levels.

Human birth has given many facilities for a Soul to evolve. Some times the evolution may go in the retrograde fashion so that one could easily go to the animal level or even to the demonic level. May the Human Soul at least remain at the Human level and slowly evolve into the Divine!. The enlightened person is the one who sees Divinity in the animate and the inanimate creation and also the most compassionate. The Buddha is such a one and hence could give the highest form of moral code -the eight fold path for Nirvaana.

We find several states of consciousness for the Human Soul. The deep sleep state, the dream state, the moribund state during operation under general anaesthesia and finally the conscious state. During the conscious state only the world exists. Yoga mentions of another state called the supra-conscious state of Samaadhi, when the Soul experiences Supreme Bliss and thus gets liberation from the cycles of Birth and Death, to reach its Original State of Bliss.

Let us strive to attain that Supreme State of Bliss, or what is called by the Yogies, a state of Samaadhi, or the State of Equilibrium, or The State of, "One with the Universal Soul" when, Time, Space and Causation disappear. Is it possible? Yes. But a constant effort is required to reach that stage and this is what is called, "Saadhana." □

REALITY OF LIFE

V.S.R. Sravani

Life seems to be a colorful **kaleidoscope**
As you see the surroundings from a **periscope**
And the whole universe through a **telescope**
But look into yourself in a **microscope**
To have in your life a much better **scope**. □

DREAM ACHIEVER

Dreams are beautiful shells on the **sea shore**
Many remain ashore gathering them in **crore**
But the one diving deep onto the **ocean floor**
Picks the pearls of success into his **store**. □

RELIGION IS THE MAIN ENEMY OF WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

Taslima Nasreen

The one whose wife dies is lucky. But not so the man whose cow dies
(A Bengali proverb).

Until a society is not based on religion and women are considered equal to men before the law, I do not think that politics will advance the cause of women. Every day, women continue to be victims of rape, trafficking, acid-throwing, dowry deaths and other kinds of torture. At the opening of this new century, women are still not considered as equal human beings in many parts of the world. Religion and patriarchy continue to have an all- encroaching hold on their lives, maintaining and justifying their age-old oppression. In some South Asian societies, this hold is even increasing.

I do not believe that there can be real equality in a society dominated by religion. Western countries speak repeatedly about the necessity of economic development to alleviate poverty. But this is not enough. Societies such as Saudi Arabia may be economically developed, but women are deprived of all rights. The supremacy of religion is incompatible with freedom of expression, women's rights and democracy. This is why I see religion as the main enemy of women's development.

We have to act on several fronts at once. First of all, improving access to education. In a society like Bangladesh, 80 per cent of women are illiterate. For centuries women have been taught they are the slaves of men. It is very hard to change their minds, to make them aware of their oppression, to give them a sense of their independence. This educational effort has to go hand in hand with a secular feminist movement in society. Such movements have to

start within the country and they cannot take hold when people are uneducated and unaware of their oppression. I'm not sure you can accomplish much from the outside, except to expose in the media the atrocities women in all too many countries face in their day to day lives. In Muslim countries, this movement is emerging, but very timidly, and it has a slim margin of manoeuvre. It has the uphill task of fighting for the repeal of religious laws and the introduction of a uniform civil code. So far, it tends to be constituted by a few individual feminists who are forced to be diplomatic, to compromise with fundamentalists, be they men or women. But they are trying to change the system, step by step, and it will take a very long time. People are not yet ready to do away with religious laws that have ever claimed to be from a divine source. Qur'an is a book of some poetry and some weird stuff and nothing more. It is not a revelation from a divine being revealed to Muhammed as Muslims claim. The first book was written some 25 to 60 years after Muhammad died and was a compilation of what his two youngest wives Ayesha and Hafz'a could recall. This book was burned and destroyed a century later and the existing one was produced.

As they say, "You cannot tell a book by its cover." The same is true for a book that sounds good to the ear if you are not able to understand it. Or that it rimes like poetry. It is the contents that are important and frankly the content of Qur'an is mostly rubbish.

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(Continued on page 58)

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Prof. G. Surender Reddy

The Constitution of sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic Republic of India, promises social justice and equality of status and opportunity to all its citizens. In consonance with the vision and the mission of the nation as envisaged in the preamble as well as the fundamental rights and the directive principles of state policy enshrined in the constitution, reservations have been provided in government jobs and admissions to educational institutions. This provision has been extended and expanded from time to time. It is essentially a form of legal remedy to redress the injustices suffered by the under privileged sections of the society. How far this measure has served the intended purpose to uplift the down-trodden is a moot question. But, there have been proponents and opponents of this policy with equally strong and valid arguments. Although some people have certain reservations on the policy of reservation, since ending discrimination is the challenge and responsibility of every citizen of India, it must be accepted as a social commitment.

India's newly elected United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has consciously included in its common minimum programme (CMP) its aim to seek job reservations in the private sector also to the weaker sections of the country. This has caused both jubilation and heartburn. The debate on the issue has unfortunately generated more heat than light. This is because no objective and impartial assessment and evaluation has been made so far on the policy and scheme of reservation. A systematic social cost benefit analysis was never even attempted. People have been merely taking stand on the issue which suits them or serves their interests social, economic or political.

Equality is a noble cause and widely accepted ideal. Level playing field is indeed justifiably pursuable goal. Is the policy of the reservation the only way of achieving this objective? Are there no alternatives? Are not the quotas divisive? Cannot we come up with new initiatives to correct the long-standing social maladies?

There are no politically correct answers to the above questions. And also, there are no easy solutions to the many social evils plaguing our pluralistic society, of which the inequities of the past is a significant one. However, many well-meaning people of the country have been advocating proactive policies to improve the lot of the disadvantaged backward classes. In other words, instead of giving them fish, we should make them learn fishing. The society must equip them with the knowledge skills and the where-withal to face the challenges of competition. The necessary resources must be earmarked towards this goal and purpose. These oppressed people must be offered freedom from dependence, so that they will enjoy freedom from prejudice. One of the possible and positive approaches to create a level playing field and equality of opportunities to all citizens of our country is affirmative action, which deserves a serious consideration. In fact, affirmative action is a step ahead of providing equal opportunities. It focuses on capacity building.

What's affirmative action? Does it really work? Naturally, these questions and doubts arise in our minds. Simply stated, affirmative action is a progressive agenda to positively impact the society to eliminate poverty, prejudice and neglect. This can be achieved

through education, social initiative, cultural change and judicial support. Where there is a societal will, there is always a socially acceptable way to redress any social injustice. Affirmative action is re-endorsement of human values. It is a mandate for just society. Affirmative action can involve and include:

- (i) A tailor-made training activity to impart social skills to improve employability.
- (ii) Providing better education and healthcare.
- (iii) Enhancing the quality of living conditions.
- (iv) Showing positive bias or reverse discrimination towards the poor and the needy.

Affirmative action does not create any creamy layers that do not allow the benefits to percolate to the people at the bottom. It can be better packaged and effectively delivered to the targeted groups who actually deserve the support.

Affirmative action, being a social responsibility of every citizen, every organization, the government and the NGOs, is expected to yield quicker and better results. It is not constrained by quotas. The only constraint is apathy, if any. The collective will

and social wisdom will ensure the success of the programs planned and designed as part of affirmative action. Affirmative action is an icon of the civil society. No one will grudge granting modest advantages to less privileged brethren of our society, for it is more than fair and is certainly humane. It is not pragmatic to have an entirely homogenous society, but egalitarian community is a distinct possibility.

Affirmative action need not be confined to a particular group, class or caste. It can cover a wide canvas extending to every section of the society who have been victims of discrimination or neglect in one form or the other. They include women, minorities, the tribals, the aged and the handicapped. This approach has its merit in its policy of non-exclusion, while actively promoting inclusion. It has less adverse side effects as compared to the policy of reservation. Affirmative action alone guarantees and strengthens unity in diversity. Proper recognition and respect for diversity promotes fraternity and solidarity. If any lacunae are found in the affirmative action practiced elsewhere, we have to mend and adapt it to suit our social realities and ethnic complexities. Let's strive for the ideal of 'Vasudaiva Kutumbikam'.

"Sarve jano sukhino bhavantu" □

Prof. Neil Johnson, a physicist at the University of Oxford said "The wierd world of Quantum Mechanics suggests tme travel could one day be possible through tiny holes, loops in the fabric of space-time." An young Indian at MIT, Anand Dorai has enthusiastically taken up the project of time travel.

-Courtesy The Hindu

FILIGREE AND SOVEREIGNTY OF HUMAN BONDS - A STUDY OF DYNAMICS IN AMEETA RATHORE'S *BLOOD TIES*

P. Rajendra Karmarkar

Blood is thick. Relationships are hard to be broken unlike the links between friends. They haunt the humans like their shadows. The sheep believes its own butcher. When the choice is between the shepherd and the butcher, the sheep prefers the butcher who has been relentless all the time but appears occasionally in sheep's clothing. Hard-hearted, self-righteous, snobbish, ostentatious and inculcating husband is the bane of a woman's life. Such husbands think that women are their subjects submitting themselves to their suzerainty but unmindful of the decisive damage they cause to them. Their hearts sometimes incline to be sympathetic giving way to exonerate the victims of their intransigence but within no time, they go back to their dark and dry bent of mind.

Ameeta Rathore, who was formerly a lawyer, was born in Bihar, one of the backward states in India and brought up in Delhi. Rathore is writing her second novel. In her first novel *Blood Ties* (2001) she tells a story of a minor girl, Ila, born in a Brahmin royal and feudal family marked by traditional binds and bounds. Raja Bahadur Brahmanand Singh, who is a landlord and zamindar holds dominance over the town Brahmanagar situated in Bihar. His only daughter was married to an Indian Administrative Service officer Mr. Prabhat Kumar Jha whose expression of displeasure at his wife's giving birth to a female child, Ila, struck a permanent breach between his wife and himself. Later, Prabhat Kumar's wife died of malaria. Ila was taken care by her grandfather. Ila received lavishing love not only from her grandfather but also from the servants of the household especially Hirya and Machali

Yadav. In a dispute about the custody of Ila, Raja Bahadur Singh sends her to the care of her father who proves to be callous and self-righteous. When Raja Bahadur files a suit in the court seeking the legal custody of his granddaughter and while framing charges against her father that he was not treating her well, Ila's choice of staying with her father surprises the judge. It summons a vicious smile from her father.

Traditions and customs are a like 'blood ties'. They hold the people in their places and guide them with the force of an undercurrent and require them to follow the etiquette. Though people might neglect the traditions, traditions seem to cling to them, like parents who do not discard their children even if children are unkind to them. In their compass, traditions rule both the rich and the poor. People preserve the relations for the sake of social life, harmony, and honour, though their love is at a low ebb. Some develop possessiveness towards somebody and keep the loveless bonds.

Raja Bahadur Brahmanand was dying in a hospital. His sister Ranakpur babi, setting aside a kind of long standing enmity between her family and her brother's, came to perform the funeral rites of her dying brother. She places the tail of a calf driven into the hospital in the hand of her brother. If a cow is the symbol of a mother, can the calf be the symbol of Ila? Or does this gesture enable Raja Bahadur Brahmanand to attain heaven or goddess Parvati's abode? "... Ila's Ranakpur babi, who had made sure her brother's oxygen supply was not cut off till the calf's tail had been placed in

his hand". Ranakpur babi, proclaims with her strong appearance at her brother's death bed that her brother was not alone and he was deprived of none. "Ila's Ranakpur babi had forgotten her life-long rivalry with her brother to make sure that in his death he was not diminished in any way".

The oppressed and the poor find some relief from the saviour role now and then being played by the militant groups living mostly in forest areas. People believe that the militants are fighting for the just cause. Although Naxalites are not related by blood, the poor and the victims foster feelings of spiritual affinity with them and treat them as their brethren and liberators. Ranakpur babi, Ila's grandfather's sister, declares proudly that her grandson, Tuttu, had gone underground to join Naxalism waging armed struggle for social justice. On the other hand, she cries in private for the heavy loss his family had suffered. Ila's cousin, Tuttu has become a Naxalite at his college in Calcutta...In public Ila's Ranakpur babi had applauded her grandson's social conscience and sense of justice. In private she had cried..."

Servants who have stayed long with their masters often make their presence felt in running the affairs of a large house. They declare their allegiance to their masters in the time of crisis, even if they commit mistakes or small crimes just like the sons and daughters of the house. Their actions demand to be judged in good faith and without reservations. They share the joys and sorrows of their masters. At the time of Raja Bahadur Brahmanand's death Machali Yadav carries into the hospital ward the 'retting jute' taken from Kosi river with its typical smell symbolizing the spiritual relations invisibly gripped in and around of Kosi river, as a last favour or rites he can do to his master. "Machali Yadav, bringing the smell of retting jute into the antiseptic ward, had performed the last unsolicited favour for his master,..."

The only relation to whom Ila was closely attached was her grand father's sister, Ranakpur babi who is so called as she lived at Ranakpur, six miles away from Brahmanagar. Ranakpur babi had a grouse that she was married at ten insinuating the prevalence of the abolished social evil of the Hindu society which gained notoriety of marrying daughters aged between two and ten. Hindu society enjoys its cruelty at the deprivation of their daughters' right to choose the bridegrooms at such tender age. "She had been married at ten by the tenets of the diabolically clever Hindu way of life, which perhaps had to protect itself from this very problem, married girls off between two and ten years of age."

Hindu husbands want their wives to bear the brunt of marital life without complaining. They should be patient to the accusations and humiliations made by the dominant members of the family. But, under no circumstances they should revolt against either their husbands or the other members of the family. There is peace in the dictum. God is in his heaven, all is right with the world. Ranakpur babi led a submissive life in her father-in-law's house. When she got married, she was the only daughter-in-law in the house. But, after her husband's brother re-married, Ranakpur babi lost her importance systematically and was reduced to complaining like a child, a nagging wife whose cries went unheeded. Her husband had never taken her charges against his sister-in-law seriously. He died thinking that he was the best and the just husband and his wife was good enough not to be worried about. "Her husband had died thinking himself the fairest and most just of men, leaving his wife to crave the understanding that she was not bad, not all women are bad...,

The Hindu marriage system and marital relations are reflected in the lives of adversaries, Raja Bahadur Brahmanand and Prabhat Kumar Jha who remain widowers though they

could remarry to lead better lives. Their adherence to widowhood evidences that they have been wedded to human bonds more spiritually than physically.

Mrs. Prabhat Kumar Jha, daughter of Raj Bahadur Brahmanand was brought up in the western style education which made her assimilate modern life style helping her to be extremely sociable with men and women. Her socializing attitude embarrasses her husband and he keeps his mother and his secretary to watch her movements. Having made allowances as a flirt and socialite, Prabhat Kumar Jha's wife created suspicion in her husband's mind beyond a patch-up. "Ila's mother had given her father a lot of fodder for the beast in his mind. She had played bridge and mahajong-gambled, had smoked-loved cheap romances." But it was more a clamor in the mind of the suspicious husband that led him to consider his wife an infidel. His mother who had been assigned the job of a spy, finds nothing of that sort. Though it was true, somehow it appears an exaggeration when she declares to herself "She knew, despite her son's assertions, that her daughter-in-law never looked at another man." Moreover, her daughter-in-law offered worship to the Goddess and performed rituals regularly. "She did her Durga Path everyday, spending half an hour reading the praises of the goddess." The fact that her son had never passed an accusation on the veracity of Ila's birth itself shows the virtuous character of Ila's mother.

True love is unfettered and dispassionate. None can resist its intrusion, as one cannot deny human nature. When love hits, it hurts. "As time passed, Ila's father found himself looking at his daughter with approving eyes. Every once in a while he found himself feeling a pang that he did not recognize as love having no experience of such an emotion. He quickly pushed away all such thoughts that came unbidden.

Developing aversion and ill-will toward his father-in-law, Prabhat Kumar Jha brings up Ila who was left with him by his father-in-law in Patna, in such a way that she is stripped of all the luxuries she had enjoyed at her grandfather's house. And he did not take her to places to entertain her. But to her surprise, he took her to the film 'Sangam' which portrays triangle love between two bosom friends who do not know each other's love towards the girl. The story ends in the death of one of the friends for the sake of his friend, which strikes a resemblance of filial love between father and grandfather for Ila. "It was therefore a great surprise when her father came home and told her he was going to take her to see Sangam."

Significantly, Prabhat Kumar Jha had never hit his daughter, Ila, because he was a member of shrotriya (Brahmin) caste which knows how to behave courteously in the society but his words and abominable actions are as much lashing as of whipping physically. "He never hit Ila, after all he was a shrotriya and knew how to conduct himself in life... His principles did not allow him to touch his daughter, but words were a different matter."

Actually, Prabhat Kumar Jha's actions had never been able to instil faith in Ila's mind, who might have taken pleasure in the trouble taken by her father to regale her. The motives that had driven the father to behave unnaturally were evident to Ila. "Ila looking at all these efforts ...realised her father's motivation." Sensing the defeat for his attempts, Prabhat Kumar Jha resorted to employ moral binding on his daughter. "... So I'm sure you will realise that a daughter's home is with her father and not in anyone else's house."

Being a discerning, and a kind girl, Ila derives strength from the roots of relations which finally come to her rescue when she is embroiled in a crisis. Her father, showing the sadistic pleasure, and eagerness, admitted her

in a humble Hindi medium school which was filled-in mostly with lower class children. Ila had put up with the situation in silence and stood first in her class amazing both her classmates and her father. "By the end of her first year in school she had topped her class, to the chagrin and astonishment of her classmates, just as he had. The only difference was that she had made the journey in reverse, from English to Hindi."

Scrutinising the thoughts of her father, Ila understands that her father being unable to love, seeks her love and wants her to treat him as her true guardian. His nature and bent of mind resembling the lotus leaf that does not hold the drop of water which is in its contact corroborates the Brahminical creed that pleads for indifference while one is in the thick of human bonds. She finds her heart entertaining no love for her father. "All these years I struggled for his acceptance and love, and now he thinks he can call on my love or duty. Well love dies."

The district judge when apprised of how her father was looking after her and how he admitted her in an unknown Hindi medium school becomes annoyed. "He had been shocked to discover that the girl was not going to the convent in Patna but to an unknown school." The judge who thought that Ila's father's conduct was worse than a charge of rape or sexual abuse, inclined to rule in favour of her grand father but he was prevented from doing so because of Ila's stunning declaration of her willingness to stay with her father. The judge says to Ila, "we have to see what would

be the best for you. If you have any strong reasons why you would prefer to live with anyone, you can tell me. She heard herself say 'My father, I suppose'

'...And you would like to live with your father'.

'Yes'

In fact, Ila in a way, wants to wreak vengeance upon her father. But, unexpectedly, like a child that searches for its mother, and like an eagle that unpredictably comes from far away and snatches its prey, Ila was seized by the call of blood or gene that drives her to find her right place. It goads her to favour her father in spite of the impending permanent loss of a loving grand father and her roots at Brahmanagar. "...At that moment the gene struck back, seething and churning, emerging out of the slime of life like a monster surfacing from the swamp in science fiction movies ...but now she was claimed by her rightful owner she was her father's daughter."¹⁹

The way Ila reacted to her chromosome signalled judicious ruling that endorses the law of nature that father is the lord of the house under whose care children enjoy the pride of living. The death of her grandfather soon revealed that she would have been left an orphan if she had gone to live with her grandfather, however, the cruel father did not allow his daughter to have a last sight of the dying man and to have the honour of conducting the final rites.

□

In 2005, Kavya, an Indian American girl of 17 years, a fresher of Harvard has become the new star in the literary world by getting an advance of Rs 2.2 Crore for two-book deal. The tentative title of the book is 'HOW OPAL MEHTA GOT KISSED, GOT WILD AND GOT IN. The offer is from Little, Brown and company, one of America's prestigious publishers—Courtesy THE WEEK.

Good news for teenage writers and first time authors!

D. C. CHAMBIAL'S *BEFORE THE PETALS UNFOLD*: AN APPRAISAL

Dr. Mahesh P. D. Singh

D.C. Chambial is certainly a major voice in the field of Indian English poetry being written today. He is besides a poet, a great critic and a reputed editor of an esteemed international journal. His contribution to Indian English poetry is very significant and he has many books of criticism to his credit in addition to several books of poems. He is also the winner of many national and international awards and attended the world poetry conference in 1986 held in Chennai. Widely published and anthologised in India and abroad, his poems have been translated into many languages of the world.

The book *Before the Petals Unfold* is the second volume of poems which was published in September 2002. It is a collection of many fine poems composed over various topics like life, death, war, nationalism and nature. It reveals the promising facets of the young poet's poetic soul and is dedicated to the suffering mankind and world peace. This very approach of the poet shows his humanitarian perspective and makes it quite clear that his only commitment is to write about the plight of the common men and to restore their dignity. It is this essential thrust of the poet which provides the book with humanism.

The poet presents the harsh realities of modern life in a quite clear and protesting manner. About life he says in his poem.

'Life':

an endless tale of
vales, dales and hills
from the black holes of eternity.
a dance set to tune
of Master Divine.

Showing his deep Concern for the human predicament in modern time he says about the individual in the same poem :

mere cog
in the wheel of time.
No will
but ordained to act and dissolve
from dark to dark.

His only goal that life will be really very beautiful when it is devoted to the search of joy is very clearly expressed in his poem 'In Quest of Cheerfulness':

Search for a berth where
Ebullient chill warms
And hatred, stip-teased
Like Snake shedding its slough,
And love buds forth
Like a white lily.
That sprinkles cheerfulness around.

Life has been presented as a puzzle, a map and petals in the poem 'Life - An Enigma'. What matters much is that one should have only perceptive eyes of an astronomer to read and drink its beauty:

Life lies spanned
in the palms of hands,
like a map
on the table
in an observatory.

The poet chooses not only life but touches upon even manifold objects of nature for poetic expression. Poems of nature include 'Behold Her Atop the Tree' 'A Day in Rains' and 'Spring Tickles in Blood'. Even heavenly bodies, clouds, rain, mountain, plants and animals make up for his images, metaphors, similes and symbols. In

the poem 'Life and Death' he says':

Heat is life
Coldness, death.

Cold is not only considered to be a cycle of nature but a synonym of death and heat of life.

We find a great resemblance between the theme of William Wordsworth's 'The Solitary Reaper' and Chambial's 'Behold Her Atop the Tree' When he says in the concluding stanza of the poem :

O Beholding her atop the tree
That dances in the wind
And She, like a fairy.
Fills the valley with her sonorous song.

In the poem 'In Broad Day Light' the destructive power of native in the form of anger is expressed very convincingly:

For Some
Queer reason
river loses temper.
swells and roars
and runs down
a lass working in her field.

In the poem 'The Jungle of Hyenas' it is "the fire" that "Singes the mind". We find: the effect of rain in the poem 'A Day in Rains':

Floors flooded
young and old
in vain
try to keep the water out.

The poet like P.B. Shelley gives vent to his optimistic view in the beginning lines of the poem 'Spring Tickles in Blood' When he says:

With the death of December
Come new hopes and aspirations
Spring is like a flight and flutter when:
Spring tickles in blood
Images flutter wing.

Nationalism which has been one of the important themes of modern poetry is also a

striking feature of the poems of Chambial. In his poem 'Upon the Snowy Heights' he has highlighted the feeling of patriotism of the Indian soldiers towards their motherland. It is undoubtedly one of the finest poems of the book which is a moving tribute to the Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives fighting bravely for the defence of their country on the Kargil heights. They surprised the whole world through their mighty fight.

While going through the book from cover to cover the reader encounters a host of spruce images which only Chambial's imagination can spin and the reader finds himself lost in beauty-gazing, image after image rising higher and higher on the plane of ecstatic joy and finds himself completely satisfied by the time he closes the book. But his poetry is not only creation of imagination, but fully engrossed in the milk of humanity and seasoned with the meat of experience of woe. He has made it stand on the firm rock of realism. His imagination takes into consideration almost everything of the world from the unfoldment of the petals to the suffering humanity and the multi-faceted aspects of nature and life. A very beautiful comparison between man and animal has been established in the poem. 'The Same Marigold'. Man and animal are different and yet alike because they "Pluck at the same sun". 'The Jungle of Hyenas' is a fine poem in which the image of "a jungle teeming with hyenas" has been used in order to describe the community and the world around him. 'The Gujarat Quake' is the longest poem in the book in which the complaint is against the maker of the universe who is not mentioned anywhere in the poem but the devastation that is unleashed is very furious. His concern for a world with devastating problems brought about by injustice and social evils is crystal clear in the following lines:

It needs time
To dispel trauma
From terrified hearts

And time
to raise towers
From terrified hearts
From the heap of debris.
(The Gujarat quake)

The poet does not spare even the politicians of the present time and their hypocrisy and crookedness. He makes use of animal imagery for this purpose in the poem 'Vultures and Crows.' Vultures and crows who stimulate "Swans" stand for hypocritical and power hungry breed of politicians and their crookedness has been very beautifully suggested by the use of the word "Swans". These masters of falsehood and double dealing have been visualised through an unforgettable animal imagery:

Wallow like pigs
In a dirty ditch
Messiahs of
stinking multiude.

Death is the profoundest and most awe inspiring certainty in man's existence which makes for its tragedy. The unexpected and often premature end of youth and beauty constitute the sharp sting of death and its triumph over frail mortals. It fills a wide space in any anthology of verse. There are a number of poems in this book which mourn death. The dark jungle symbolises, mirage and approaching death:

The jackals howl
as the dark jungle moves in.
and shadows
lengthening to infinity
dissolve in dark.

'Green Memories' is written on the death of a three year old child. Death has been presented under many guises in the book. Cyclone took many precious lives in Orissa in the poem 'I wonder at His Judgment' which is written in the form of a villanelle. Earthquake causes large scale destruction in 'The Gujrat

Quake'. The poet presents a very lively but horrible picture of devastation of human lives in Yugoslavia. It speaks of 'Sirens deafening sounds' and "grass" growing in "blood". We can hardly find a poem like 'Death by Fire' describing the snatching of lives of people by fire. It consumed hundreds of students and parents celebrating D.A. V. centenary in 1995, killed hundreds of people in 1997 assembled for Nigomanado convention at Baripada in Orissa and burnt alive hundreds of devotees to death at Macca in the tents of Haj pilgrimage. We find a very thought-provoking image of death in the poem 'Dust into Dust':

Death these days
never knocks at door
Comes flying on wing.

There is a poem expressing anguish over the loss of values. The world suffers from moral void. The poet says in the poem 'The Moral Void':

Here the milk of man is all dried
Devoid of daring, cowards for sooth,

'Virus' is a poem of vehement criticism on traitorous behaviour of man
Man, the noble deed of God
Made in His own image.
Is rotten, A heap of debris
Big mansions erected
on the ground of ethics
Fall down like sand dunes in storm.

Simplicity and clarity are two important qualities of his style. He never uses difficult words. There is no obscurity in his metaphors and images. His thoughts may be difficult to understand but he always expresses it in the simplest of words. His poems show his command over metaphors. At its best there is a precision and economy in the use of language and a profusion of images drawn from nature and also from animal world. The use of colour, light and shade in his imagery is very impressive. His reference to a "Tree pink with hope".

(Captive Sun) and the mention of "love budsforth like a white lily" is highly captivating. The imagery of night in the poem 'A Day in Rains' is also not less fascinating:

The night, Crystal clear-
Smoky shutters slither away like the veil of
a newly wedded bride
before her husband in a secluded room.

Chambial's poems contain the imagery

of warfare, fire and volcanic disaster. Thus, we come to this conclusion that the poet has a vision of a happy and meaningful existence of man on the earth. He has also a love for life which can bring happiness and joy to mankind and which is the basis of universal peace and human harmony. Every poem in the book claims the attention of the reader with its own quality and innovative thoughts and fascinates the reader with enhancement of interest to read the poems more than once. □

THE DARKEST NIGHTS

Kuldeep Verma

In the darkest nights
If go to a harmonic flight
The perception
The infatuation
Drives me always
To unknown place
If I reached on an archaic height

The miraculous experiences
The love, which is quandary
Make me aware of the distances
I made
Or made itself
The epitome of these
Which merely fences

My acquainted places
Are habitual to me
But aversion and agitation for me
My beauteous faces

Are adorable to me
But even are my inferiority causes

That serpentine river screams
cadences manipulate
If I stand at her
The waters my expression exaggerate
I apologize for my sin
The stones do not let me win
I confess my crimes
The soil does not let me to sing hymns

In the darkest nights
If I go to a harmonic flight
Obscurities prevail on me
My relations decline on me
My notions are made elusive
Make me faint always
These darkest nights

□

JOSHUA'S POETRY: A SUBALTERN STUDY

M.R.C. Mohan Rao

At a time Subaltern literature is making waves in the world of literary creations, it would be rewarding to recall the poetry of the Telugu Poet, Gurram Joshuva, the recipient of Padmabhushan (1970) from the Government of India.

To study Joshuva's poetry is to stand inside society as it has the sociological component. It is not a verbal marvel of devalaya poetry or composition, which arose from the impact of an aesthetic moment or mystic state, but poetry of human experience. Joshuva's poetry is a document on the predicament of Subaltern classes, dalits and women. Dalits and women in India form the Subaltern classes who are subjected to the hegemony of Hindu Social order. He says that caste, untouchability-bound social relationship is what weakened Hindu society and enslaved Mother India. He wanted to make every man and woman free from the thralldom of Shastras and to cleanse their minds of pernicious notions imbibed in them over the ages. With all his bitterness towards the caste system he never tried to antagonize other castes but only tried to reform and integrate Hindu society with his powerful poetry. Joshuva's poetry creates a purgatory effect on the readers.

Joshuva was born on September 28, 1895 in a small village, Vinukonda, in Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. The Caste foundation of his life forms the philosophical foundation for the castle of his poetry. He held his pen as a weapon against the social evils and enriched Telugu poetry with his lyrics scaling the heights of universal humanism. He wrote many books. "Muntaj Mahal", "Firadausi," and "Gabbilam," are among his masterpieces.

"Gabbilam" written by Joshuva is hailed as the epic of dalits in Telugu literature. In "Gabbilam" (The nocturnal animal, BAT), one can hear the heartbeats of the people who are perpetually condemned to live without rights and respect. It is the voice of the mute and submissive human sector, who for no fault of theirs, are deprived of the fruits of their labour, by the superimposition of caste in their existence. Gabbilam is modeled after Kalida's "Meghadutam" (Cloud Messenger). The difference between the two is Kalidasa's hero is an angel in love and Joshuva's hero is a hungry cobbler. Kalidasa's messenger is a superior breed "cloud" while Joshuva's messenger is a black and ugly nocturnal bird "bat" (Gabbilam). The bat is considered a bad omen and can therefore relate to the plight of the untouchables. Joshuva's hero, the hungry cobbler, makes "Gabbilam" as his messenger to God, to convey misery and indignity heaped upon him by his fellow-countrymen. He makes a poignant plea to the bat in the following way (translated English version of the Telugu poem by Sri.K.Madhava Rao, former Chief Secretary of A.P)

"When you are hanging upside down in the temple
Quite close you will be to Siva's ear
Narrate the story of my suffering to God
Making sure that no priest is around".

The significant turn in the poem is that he pleads with the bat (the nocturnal being) not to convey his feelings to God in the presence of a Pujari (Priest). The priest, in case of dalits, is an impregnable barrier and diverts the attention of universal soul not to hear the entreaty of the Dalits. To express his agony of being an untouchable, he writes,

"This still night has lulled the whole world
to sleep

But it forgot the very me,
Afflicted as I am with incurable
Disease of untouchability".

He makes fun of the so-called charity of
the people,

"Feed they sugar to hapless ants
Offer they milk to venomous snakes
Yet even the Goddess of Justice
Shudders at the very sight of this
untouchable"

He also warns the people, if this odious
practice of untouchability continues, it would
destroy the Nation.

The scourge of untouchability
Can denigrate the country in the comity
of Nations

Tears of untouchability will burst like
thunderbolts
And doom the Nation to destruction".

Joshuva's poems invaded villages and a
majority of literates. They sounded like songs
with lyrical fervor and oratorical sonority. That
is why they are extremely used in dramas and
films, listening to which the Telugu people wept
publicly.

In the same vein, he wrote on the other
subaltern group, "Women" in Hindu society.
He studied why women who are equally
responsible for the creation of history and
culture, are conditioned to take unnatural
stances in life. He realized that disruptive
customs and outdated practices inculcated
upon their minds are what keeping womenfolk
under perpetual lease of social slavery. He
expresses his revulsion against the treatment
of women in the following way,

"You silently suffer when men treat you as a
mere tool in the kitchen
We instil fear in wives not to challenge
husband's actions

We teach things to kill the desires of women
We imprison women in the jails of religious
rites

We destroy all natural talents of women"

He says that the subjugation of woman
found its manifestation in the words like
"Abala" (weak) first used against women in
Rigveda. Yet in another poem, the poet Joshuva
says that a married woman who is subjected
to the cruelty of in-laws, is made to lead the
life of a rotary animal without individuality,
crossing every day the bridge of swords built
over the gaping gulf of time by the orthodox
society, just for the sake of a title The Most
Loyal Wife. He says that to keep her tradition-
bound, ignorant and superstitious is the vested
interest of the patriarchy. When one of his
Telugu poem is loosely translated into English
it means,

"What is the role of a woman as a daughter-
in-law?
To submit her will to the willful cruelty of her
in-laws

What is the role of woman married?
To be humiliated as a widow with the death
of her husband

What is the role of a woman as wife?
To be honoured as "Most loyal wife" for
sacrificing her individuality

What is the role of a woman as sister?
To live without a claim to her ancestral
property".

He longed for equality and universal
brotherhood. In a poem, he says, "Not bound
by ties of caste and creed / Not kept in the
cage of their self-made bars / I call myself a
citizen of the world / No matter what others
prefer to call me".

The depth of human touch is so appealing
that no one can turn a blind eye to his works.
An English Poet on some occasion said, "This
is the art of uniting pleasure, with truth by calling

imagination to the help of reason." This aptly applies to Joshuva's poetry. The fine art of word-coining is the unique gift of Joshuva. He was honoured with awards like "Kavikokila", "Kavi Chakravathy" and "Kavisamrat" for beauty and bounty of expression in Desi Telugu and pulsating language. Joshuva has not only highlighted the miserable existence of the Indian subaltern classes in Telugu literature but also immortalized himself through his sweet and

memorable poetry. He uses the same "platform of poetry" used by the orthodox poets as a means to fight bitterly against casteism, untouchability and suppression of women. The evils of untouchability and inequality have reduced the subaltern classes in India to a sub-human status. Joshuva's poetry makes much sense when the attitudes of the cultivated cynics are put aside. □

TO THE DEAR DEPARTED

Srinivasa Rangaswami

Kindred soul
You have winged away
Afar
Beyond tears, beyond recall...

Destiny was not kind to you
Your journey weary
Your brow knit with gloom
Bravely still you plodded on
Ploughed in thought, in private quest
Of the holy grail.

Until your last breath, the very last,
undaunted by the thorns and thirst
of an untrodden ground
under an alien sun
you pressed on
the lodestar of a new harvest
of unreaped golden corn.

Surely yet we shall meet
sometime, somewhere
yourself robed in light
winged, joyous
to soar to other realms,
no longer held
By the crippling inequities
of this our unkind world. □

*[Lines written on hearing the news of the sudden demise of scholar of standing
Prof. P.B. Sitaramayya of Bangalore] Triveni's valued contributor*

LITERACY PERSPECTIVE IN INDIA

S. K. Raghunath

Introduction

Education is a process aimed at allround development of the individual. Education of non-literate adults in the productive age group of 15-35 years was considered an essential task set to be achieved by the Nation. Adult Education is the education of the adult for improving his/her quality of life. As life expands, the education of the adult must also expand. This expanding process of education is all within the sphere of the adult. Even though there were some efforts from the State and Central Governments besides voluntary efforts from the Non-Governmental organisations in the past, the objective of eradicating illiteracy among the adults could not be achieved. The failure to achieve universal literacy was mainly due to not being able to implement the policy of providing free and compulsory primary education upto the age of 14 years as visualised in the Directive Principles of state policy enshrined in the Constitution of India. In order to achieve the objective of universal literacy a two pronged approach has been adapted. One approach is to ensure education of children in the age group of 6-14 years and the other is to implement literacy programme for non-literate adults in the age group of 15-35 years. However the latter was reflected in the political will of the nation. Realising the gravity of illiteracy status in the country, the National Adult Education Programme was launched in the year 1978 with the objective of imparting literacy to 100 million adult non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years with in a period of 5 years. This was initiated in accordance with the policy decision of 1977 by the Government of India. Later on the literacy movement gained momentum with National Literacy Mission, Total Literacy Campaign and Sarvasiksha Abhiyan (Education for All) programmes being

implemented by the State and Central Governments. Though the magnitude of the problem of illiteracy was realised by the people at the helm of affairs it is a matter of great distress that the targets could not be achieved.

Growth of Literacy - in The Past Five Decades

The Census definition of literacy is the ability to read and write with understanding in any language. It is not necessary for a person to have received any formal education or passed any examination for being qualified as a literate. A person who can read but cannot write is treated as non-literate.

The following Table gives the growth of literacy for the country as a whole since 1951.

Sex	Census Year					
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Males	27.2	40.4	46.4	46.4	64.1	75.9
Females	8.9	15.4	22.0	29.8	39.3	54.2
Literacy Rate	18.3	28.3	34.5	43.6	52.2	65.4

Note: Literary rates (percentage literature to population) for 1951, 1961 and 1971 censuses relate to population and aged 5 and above. The rates for the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses relate to the population aged 7 and above.

Source: Registration General and Census Commissioner, India (2001. Provisional Population Totals, Paper-1 of 2001, New Delhi)

From a low level of 18.3% in 1951, the literacy rate in India more than tripled to 65.4% in 2001. Since the population of the country has grown much faster than the rate of literacy, the absolute number of non-literate persons

increased steadily from 1951 to 2001. The 2001 Census, however, revealed that the total number of non-literate persons has declined to 296 million from 328 million in 1991. For the first time since independence there was a decline in the absolute number of non-literates during this decade. Despite the above fact, one would be astonished to note that the number of non-literate persons of age 7 and above in India is equal to the entire population of United States of America.

Level of literacy among states in India

There is substantial variation in the level of literacy among States of India. Kerala, with a literacy rate of 91 % occupied the first rank, while the state of Bihar with a literacy rate of 47.5% occupied the last position in the country. Among the 20 states with population of 5 million or more, Maharashtra with a literacy rate of 77.3% comes next after Kerala, followed by Himachal Pradesh (77.1 %), Tamil Nadu (73.5%). Uttaranchal (72.3%) and Gujarat (70%). There are 10 states including Andhra Pradesh where the literacy rates in 2001 are lower than the national average of 65.4%.

Female literacy in India

The high proportion of non-literate women, a major feature of the educational situation in India stands out strikingly in the Census figures. At the beginning of the last

century, the level of female literacy was extraordinarily low; of every 1000 females only 6 were literate. Since then the female literacy had progressed slowly and in 1951, only about 9% of females aged 5 and above were literate. There were many reasons for the tardy progress of female literacy during the pre-independence era. It should be mentioned that the status and the general conditions of the Indian women were not favourable. There were hardly any facilities available for separate schooling for girls. Moreover, the number of adequately trained women teachers was negligible in those years. The social norms which were prevailing in the Indian society was not in favour of sending girls to school. The high incidence of child marriage in many parts of India was another factor which deprived the opportunities for women to acquire education.

The post-independence period witnessed notable progress in the efforts to eradicate the mass illiteracy of the female population. Many measures were introduced by the government to improve the position of women in the society. Special Acts such as Marriage Act (1954), Hindu Marriage Act (1955), Succession Act (1956) and the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1978 were passed in the Parliament to improve the status of Indian women. As a result, the female literacy has progressed steadily over the years. During the last 50 years, the female literacy rate increased by six times, from 8.9% in 1951 to 54.2% in 2001.

Female Literacy Rates for Major States of India 2001

% literate among female, age 7+	States
65 and above	Kerala (87.9), Himachal Pradesh (68.1), Maharashtra (67.5),
60-65	Tamil Nadu (64.6), Punjab (63.6), Uttaranchal (60.3) West Bengal (60.2)
55-59	Gujarat (58.6), Karnataka (57.5), Haryana (56.3), Assam (56.0)
50-54	Chattisgarh (52.4), Andhra Pradesh (51.2), Orissa (51.0), Madhya Pradesh (50.3)
Less than 50	Rajasthan (44.3), Uttar Pradesh (43.0), Jammu & Kashmir (41.8), Jharkhand (39.4), Bihar (33.6)

Note: Literary rates are shown for 20 major states with population of 5 million or more in 2001. Figures in parentheses are percentages for the respective states.

Female literacy, an important indicator of empowerment of women varies from the lowest level of 33.6% in Bihar to the highest level of 87.9% in Kerala. The national average is 54.2%. Kerala's achievement in the progress of eradicating female illiteracy is something unique in India. There is no other major state in India which is comparable to Kerala as far as literacy is concerned. Even Maharashtra which ranks next to Kerala does not come anywhere near to Kerala's achievement. Besides Maharashtra, there are only five major states, namely Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Uttaranchal and West Bengal where female literacy rates are between 60% and 74%. Nine major states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand and Bihar have female literacy levels well below the national average.

It is of interest to note that during the decade 1991-2001 female literacy had grown faster than male literacy. For the country as a whole, while female literacy increased by 15 percentage points during 1991-2001, male literacy increased by only 12 percentage points. In the states of Rajasthan, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, female literacy increased by more than 20 percentage points between 1991 and 2001. The states of Andhra Pradesh, Uttar and Uttaranchal have recorded an increment of 19 percentage points in female literacy during this period. In general, it is observed that the percentage points gain during 1991-2001 decade is more in those states where female literacy

levels in 1991 were low. Kerala has shown a meager increase of 1.7 percentage points during 1991-2001 decade. Since the state has already achieved a high level of literacy, further large increase in literacy is just not possible.

The problem of gender disparity in literacy

The gender disparity in literacy rate can be examined by means of two indices: female/male ratio of literacy rates and the ratio of the number of female literates to 1000 male literates. In the absence of gender disparity in literacy level, female/male ratio of literacy rate should be equal to unity and the ratio of female literates to 1000 male literates should be equal to 1000. Lower the ratio, larger the gender disparity in literacy rate.

For the country as a whole, significant gender disparity in literacy rates exist, but these are narrowing with the passage of time, by a rising trend in the ratio of female literacy rate to the male literacy rate. This ratio has increased steadily from 0.33 in 1951 to 0.71 in 2001. Likewise, the number of female literates per 1000 male literates has also shown an increasing trend, from 304 in 1951 to 667 in 2001. The upward trend in these two measures indicate that gender disparity in literacy rate has reduced over the decades and female literacy rate is gradually catching up with male literacy rate.

Gender Disparity in Literacy, India 1951-2001

Gender Disparity Index	Census Year					
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Female/Male ratio of literacy rate	0.33	0.38	0.48	0.53	0.61	0.71
Female literates per 1000 Male literates	304	354	440	490	565	667

Analyses of 2001 Census data reveal the existence of a strong relationship between the level of literacy and gender disparity in literacy. States with high levels of literacy tend to have small gender differentials in literacy, while states with low literacy levels are more likely to have large gender differentials in literacy rate. By increasing the overall literacy level or female literacy rate, gender differentials in literacy are expected to reduce.

Summing Up

During 1991-2001 the literate population aged 7 and above in India have grown more than twice as fast as the total population aged 7 and above. For the first time since Independence the absolute number of non-literates in the country declined to 32 million during 1991-2001. This decade also witnessed that the female literacy rate had grown faster than male literacy rate. However there exists wide variation in the level of literacy, ranging from the lowest rate of 47.5% in Bihar to the highest of 91 % in Kerala. Gender disparities

in literacy rates are observed, but they are gradually narrowing over the years. Projections of trends in literacy rates indicate that, if 1991-2001 trend continues, it would take another 26 years for the goal of universal literacy to be achieved all over India. If special efforts are made to accelerate the pace of eradicating illiteracy in the laggard states like Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh where current levels of literacy are much lower than the national average, this goal could be achieved sooner. It is therefore necessary to initiate steps with innovative techniques, such as concentrating on low female literacy districts / blocks, special literacy drives on tribal pockets in various states; addressing the tri goals of 100% enrollment retention and achievement among the children in the age group of 6-14 etc. to realise the dream of Education for All by 2015 so that all the disadvantaged groups of people will have access to the opportunity structure, thereby enabling them to enjoy the fruits of democracy and socialism in letter and spirit.



It was the custom of Adolf Hitler reclining on the cot and watching the mice nibble at the crumbs of bread which he invariably scattered on the floor right before. He muses "I had known so much poverty in my life that I was well able to imagine the hunger and also the pleasure of the little creatures."

- 'The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich'
William L. Shirer

BOOK REVIEWS

ENGLISH

MY SOLITARY SONGS OF PAIN AND PLEASURE By Dr. C. Jacob, Narsapur 534275

Dr.C.Jacob, District Judge, (Retd.) is a prolific writer of English prose with a poetic touch. He is a keen observer of human nature in its myriad colours. His recent book of poetry is a true reflection of his poetic genius. His verses are a perennial spring from which come his spontaneous and brilliant expressions of his inner self. There is no subject he leaves untouched.

The author deals at length with the ills that beset our motherland as a whole. 'Our India' gives a bleak image of our country. 'Cows and bulls in busy markets, frenzied processions block high way for weddings of gods and demons' bring a gruesome image of Indian roads and its people. The writer almost wishes for a situation where 'the druggist's wife died of spurious pills', 'the milkman's beloved daughter died of diarrhoea', in 'Self Bite'. The verse 'Self Bite' strongly speaks of the poet's condemnation of wide spread corruption. The same thought is carried forward in the short verse 'Corruption'. The writer's heart cries out

'How in the broad day light
The shameless corruption proudly walks
Along the crooked sheets of life
Kissing every vice as it's dear child!'

But there is hope in 'The Incorruptible Mind'. He 'who is not tempted for treasure of gold to speak untruth' holds hope for future world as he who is himself unmoved 'moves other by dint of will.'

The romantic side of the writer is revealed in his 'Dream Love'. The lover's pathos is exquisitely expressed in 'why the

parting pain should parting joy surpass?' His yearning for perfect love has a dream-like quality.

'Every inch of you is made of gold
your eyes do shine more in the night.'

The writer has a word even for 'White Ants' who 'feast' on Milton's immortal "Paradise Lost" and "Munch Shakespeare." "He calls them a slip in 'Nature's plan'. He reminds the young men to 'know their parents suffering' and 'look at the sunken eyes of your parents'. The nostalgic yearning for the past flashes in 'Distant Memories'. The role of the parent and the teacher is well explored in the verse 'children' who 'take shape we give at home'.

One is reminded of Shakespeare's 'Sweet are the uses of adversity' on reading 'The Song of Sorrow'.

'The songs of sorrow are sweeter than
The songs of mirth and merriment'.

His shorter verses also contain profound thoughts. 'Poverty' becomes a welcome mate as its virtues are 'precious more'. The world is likened to relentless cosmic drama in 'The Cosmic Drama'. One is reminded of Tennyson's lines "Old order changeth yielding place to the new". The book abounds in moral instructions like "Great men are strong not by the food they eat, but by their relentless fight against fate". In short the writer has brought his discerning and profound thoughts to his charming and alluring verses. 'The Balance' is struck in 'The World of Contradictions'. The writer has a rare felicity of expression in discussing "All things under the sky". The verses have a lyrical quality of the Romantics that touch our heart. At the same time, they are thought-provoking and reflective having come from a judge's pen. The poet in him brings a charm to the sharp and impartial judging

qualities. The collection of poems are truly the songs of pain and pleasure, that need to be read by all book lovers.

- *K. Gopal Krishna Murthy, A. Padmaja*

SPOKEN ENGLISH AND ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING: By I Satyasree, 207, Sumanjali Apartments, 1-1-780/1&2, St. No. 2, Gandhi nagar, Hyderabad-500 080. Pages 51, Price-Rs 50/-

English language fell from grace in 1947. Efforts are afoot to set the clock back and see that this language regains its lost glory in this country. Every conceivable effort is being made to restore the lost ground and help this generation realise the importance of this international interactive medium.

The world has become a big global village with the advent of I.T. Hereafter the only language that would be spoken in this big village for commerce, trade, science and technology would be English. Keeping this in view as part of restoration efforts, Mrs. I. Satyasree authored a guide book entitled "Spoken English and the Art of Public Speaking." This book contains dialogues of situational conversation in daily life, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, proverbs and the art of public speaking. The difficulties that beset the learners are pointed out so that learning is made easy for them. Pit-falls in structure are illustrated.

The chapter on public speaking creates interest as it contains remarkable speeches of great orators of national and international repute like Lincoln, Martin Luther king, Vivekananda and others.

The author who brought out this book in a charming style is an experienced teacher who has been teaching English for two decades. The book is prefaced by Prof. I.V. Chalapati Rao. Everyone should use this language book and reap the benefit. The present day students

are well equipped with the subjects they study but owing to a lack of adequate knowledge of English they cannot communicate effectively and fare well in conversation. Books of this nature pave the way for a better grip and grasp of the language. This remains a source book for teachers and students alike.

-*K. Gopala Krishna Murthy, Vijayawada*

TELUGU

MANAVA JEEVITA NIBANDHANA (2 parts); (Tr. Telugu) Dr. Ratnakara Balaraju, Saketa Nilayam, 21, SBI Colony, Anantapur, 515001; Rs 200

The book written by the well-known writer on spiritual subjects is complete in two parts translated from an Indian Manuscript written by an Ancient Brahmin—As stated by Dr. M. Sivaramakrishna in his foreword. This book is a unique book and also a continuing link in the chain of other translation of Dr. Balaraju's spiritual books such as Sitaramanjaneya Samvadham, Buddha darshanam and Dhammapadam, Brahmasutra, Sri Yoga Vasista Sangrahamu, etc. All these books with their thorough and exhaustive introductions, cross references and commentaries are treasures to the preserved.

"The Economy of Human life discovered in Lhasa translated by an unknown author and dedicated by him to the Earl of Chesterfield, made its first appearance in 1751 and by 1812 ran into fifty editions and got translated into various languages. The Manuscript written by an unknown Indian sage for the welfare of mankind was found in the ancient library of Grand Lama at Lhasa (Tibet) and translated into English by an anonymous Englishman at the Command of the Earl of Chesterfield in the year 1751. The Economy of Human life is a manual which helps in cultivation of virtue and the quest of knowledge. This is a spiritual book now made available to the Telugu reading public by Dr. Balaraju, a scholar who received

commendations from philosophers like Dr.S. Radhakrishnan and spiritualists like Swami Ranganathananda. The intertexts provided by the author at various places evidences the knowledge and scholarship of the author.

"The Economy of Human Life" is in two parts, part-I consists of seven chapters and Part II is of five chapters.

The first chapter of part I covers the virtues of thoughtfulness, obedience, efforts, desire to win, vision, contentment, state of equilibrium, eating and drinking habits etc. The second chapter covers the positive traits of hope, happiness, kindness, love, desire etc. The Third chapter discusses the qualities a woman should possess, the fourth about various relationships, the fifth about the differences

created by God in Life, The sixth about the social norms and the seventh about religion.

Part II of the book delves into the formation of human body, the senses, the soul, life and its benefits in its 1st chapter. The second chapter discusses the weak points of a human being and the third about the negative traits which need Control and Elimination. The fourth chapter discusses the great qualities of Generosity, Honour, Greatness, Knowledge, Scholarship etc, and the last chapter deals with dangers, diseases, sorrow and death which are beyond Human control.

The book reasonably priced at Rs. 200/- makes a useful and interesting reading and the praise-worthy book will be a welcome addition to adorn any library.

-I. Hara Krishna

(Continued from page 38)
by the book "Rage against the veil" biography of her sister Dr. Homa Darabi who was immolated in Teheran street protesting against the brutal rule on veiling system in Iran.

For women's status to change, we also need enlightened leaders who believe in equality. In countries such as mine, women with a strong voice do not have the support of political leaders, whether they be men or women. Look at the countries in which women are in politics, or even heads of state. Does it follow that women in those countries are emancipated? Because of long-standing vested interests, such leaders continue to back measures that oppress women. They are not ideologically committed to changing these conditions. In South Asia, most of the women who become heads of state are religious and like men, they adhere to the religious objectives or the Establishment. I am the victim of a country where the Prime Minister is a woman. Because I went one step too far in denouncing religion and the oppression that it keeps women under, I had to leave my country.

I have seen women oppose me when I talked about women's rights. They said straight out that God did not believe that women should have so many rights. And I have met men in my country who are against what is said in the religious scriptures and believe in equality between men and women. It does not depend on gender. It depends on one's conscience. Muslim women who are wearing the veil and glorifying their subservience are obviously not going to better the lives of the oppressed.

Until a society is not based on religion and women are considered equal to men before the law, I do not think that politics will advance the cause of women. In Western countries, women are educated, they are treated equally, they have access to jobs. In these conditions, their participation in politics has a meaning.

Education, a secular feminist movement, and leaders-both men and women committed to equality and justice. This is what it will take to change the dire conditions which too many women still face today. It will take a very long time, but we are here to work towards that end. □

READER'S MAIL

"Your latest issue, dedicated to our former Prime Minister, Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao, gave a precise estimate of Sri P. V. as a scholar, as an administrator and an astute statesman with a resourceful mind to tide over crisis. It would have been better if a few excerpts from his autobiography "The Insider" had been published." - **G. Somaseshu, Nizamabad**

"Choice of FOOTBALL as the topic for your interesting editorial might have surprised most of your readers who usually expect articles on literary themes reflecting moral and spiritual values. You have rightly said that excessive zeal for cricket neglecting all other games has resulted in great injustice, particularly to the young players interested in popular games. Your next editorial about Jesus Christ has appeared appropriately during Christmas (December 2004) and almost all the most inspiring lines from the Holy Bible and the words spoken by Christ are woven into a beautiful wreath presenting the quitenessence of Christianity."

-**M. G. Narasimha Murthy, Hyderabad**

"It was inspiring reading your article under the TRIPLE STREAM. The need for Inter-faith understanding - Jesus Christ - It was timely too. May God bless you in your efforts in this direction. It was one of my major aims, while serving the YMCA, to promote Ecumenism which will unite All, breaking the barriers of caste, creed, community, colour, country, language etc., To that end, I had organised such programmes in Hyderabad as well as in London."

-**D.S. Chinnadorai, Coimbatore.**

"Thank you so much for the issue of TRIVENI (Jan-Mar 05). It was a big pleasure

for me to see my poem 'Body of Woman' in such prestigious magazine. I wish you all the best in all your deeds and I hope that our co-operation will continue in future"

-**Dr. Adolf P. Shvedchikov, Calif, USA**

"Congratulations on your achievement in keeping up the journal marching ahead towards Centenary celebrations. The quality of the articles continues to be high, contributions coming from eminent politicians and intellectuals too. Of particular significance have been your thoughtful editorials in which both scholarship and critical acumen are evident."

-**Prof. D. Ramakrishna, Warangal**

It is heartening to know that back numbers of TRIVENI are made accessible on the Internet for free reading. I am sure this will prove to be a godsend to researchers who can now avail themselves of the benefit of the back issues with the click of a button. And kudos, to Prof. I.V. Chalapati Rao for his memoir on the savant statesman Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao ('My Association with P.V.') which is quite informative in the sense that it throws light on the origin of open jails, Navodaya Schools, Autonomous Colleges etc.,"

- **I. A. Pani, Nellore**

"I congratulate you for the dedication of the issue to late Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, an eminent man of letters, and also for writing very informative and enlightening articles. Other articles included in the issue are also fine. 'Mobile Mania' by T. Krishnan is an eye opener and 'Dr. A.S. Rao' the architect of ECIL by I. Satysree is superb."

-**K.M. Kale, Gondia(Maharashtra)**

WHO'S WHO

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TRIPLE STREAM**MASS MEDIA - REQUIEM FOR CULTURAL VALUES***I. V. Chalapati Rao*

The press enjoys the dignified appellation of 'the Fourth Estate'. But what is actually happening in our country? There is an increasing tendency to imitate the tabloid press of the west behaving not as a watch dog but as a blood hound prying into the private lives of high-profile men and women and making shocking disclosures of scandals to pander to the vulgar taste of the readers. There is little restraint in indulging in obscenity and mud-raking. In pursuit of their misconceived notions of the spirit of independent journalism and freedom of expression they are exhibiting degeneration of taste, trivialization of news and unrestrained film-glamourisation. The boundary line between real culture and cheap entertainment has become blurred and it has become routine to designate as culture all activities in which 'thinking' has no role. It looks as though the country has run out of intellectuals, men and women of true heroic stature and simple living.

News media and especially the Television are sending wrong signals to the youth by projecting fashion models, film stars, brand ambassadors and political criminals as role models and culture leaders by giving them too much space and publishing their large size colour photos. Spicy bits of their unedifying private lives and related trivia are being given

focus. During these two decades India has been hijacked from its time-honoured culture into a culture of consumerism otherwise known as Five-Star Hotel culture which consists in a carnival of spending. Food, fun and unabashed luxury figure prominently in the media. We find proliferation of vulgarity, crime, rape and mindless violence.

By the time a boy gets out of the school and the college, he has watched about 15000 hours of television, witnessed 1200 murders and observed 10,000 alcohol related scenes. Boys learn their attitudes, values and habits from television and the movies. They get the message that smoking is glamour, drinking is fun, drugs are the 'in' things and teachers are jokers.

Television serials and advertisements and cinema present women in scanty dress and undignified manner. Women have to appear in seductive poses not only for advertisements of soaps, tooth pastes and cosmetics but also for shaving razors which men use! The less we talk about break dances and love scenes where flesh is flaunted, the better. Thin partitions divide pornography and subtle erotica. Dialogues are made deliberately ambiguous. One news item says: "Inspired by a film, two minors rape a 7 year girl!" We can

multiply such samples. Occasionally there may be such incidents in a corner of the country with motivation supplied by the media and may go unnoticed in the normal course. But extensive publicity is being given by presenting them on T.V. in millions of people's homes or on a front page of a newspaper that is seen all over the world. Particularly terrorists and hostage-taking kidnappers may be tempted to commit worse crimes to get world-wide coverage. Sex seems to be an obsession with the media. A news item says: "Hints of sex scam in Aurobindo Ashram of Pondicherry. Some women inmates of the Ashram have alleged sexual harassment and other perverted acts". We find unmentionable things reported now and then.

Our culture leaders today are creatures of the mass media market place and public relations hype. We wonder whether India is the same sacred soil from which once sprouted forth intellectuals and great men like Gautam Buddha, Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

However, we should give credit where it is due. There are noble exceptions. Investigative Journalism and Judicial activism are the real antidotes to political corruption, social evils and economic crimes. The press is doing a good job in exposing bribery and corruption in high places. In fact Tehelka has done to a lesser extent what Watergate had done in America. The media deserves credit

for exposing the scams, the superstitions of the people and unmasking fake 'gurus' and self-styled god men. Unfortunately the good work done in this direction is neutralized by the shortcomings already discussed. One drop of poison is enough to render the whole milk unwholesome.

What is the remedy other than the present policy of appointing censor boards which smacks of politicization and blatant favouritism. Important appointments are politicized. Of course, the censor board is an ineffective body without teeth. There is urgent need for a regulatory body to effectively check obscenity, sleaze and other evils which make the media a menace to society.

We understand that at a national round table conducted recently in Hyderabad, the Union Information and Broadcasting Minister, Press Council Chairman and influential media personalities decided against a 'Lakshman Rekha' for News Media. We hear that the Minister was in favour of 'Collective and cool intropsection'. The Chairman of the Press Council too preferred 'Self Regulation'. It is common knowledge and widely held public opinion that the so-called Self Regulation will be as ineffective and impracticable as the self-regulated code of conduct for politicians. In the present context newspapers are not expected to be guardians of public morality and promotion of values as long as they are service tools in the hands of profiteering

business magnates and Press barons.

It is amusing to expect them to practice 'introspection' and draw their own 'Lakshman Rekha'. It is common knowledge that the most

powerful eye cannot see itself any more than a working instrument can work upon itself.

'There are none so blind as those that will not see' -the old saying is true.

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SHADOWS & SHADES

Dr. R. R. Menon

Shadows goose-step in front,
or follow you with a look that won't
kill you, but do as much, with a slant
and size based on the fall of light
that helps the growth of the money-plant.
Except at noon when you are ablaze
like the equinox sun, or in your night phase
like some odd wife of long-wedded years
neither living in peace nor leaving for fears.

They could well be self-created by vaunted
darkness of the mind, or by the unwanted
residues of thoughts that float around
to subjugate you when the ground
you stand on, develop deep fissures
of despair or defeat due to intense pressures.
Shadows are yesterday's memories
that coalesce as your unspecified worries.

Shades are but steps in each mood-colour,
less dangerous, but fixing each moment
with a glue of doubt, and uncertainty's pallor
that lets you decide through time's torment.
Shades in the long run readily fulfil
the twists and turns of your taste and will.

Shadows are right when the sun scorches
you to stretch beyond the reached beaches
beside the sea, wide, deep and dark, that

watches

the futile, frantic, time-clipped searches.
And shadows you avoid when the light-source
is within, not without, no regret or remorse
driving out light. Yet you patiently wait because
they bring respite, and sharpen each pause
with a tactile sense that sensitizes the paws.

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CONCEPT OF CLUSTER OF COLLEGES FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Smt. V. Koteswaramma

Higher Education has been undergoing radical changes the world over in order to meet the changing social needs and aspirations. It is becoming organically flexible in diversity of programmes, in its structure, in its curricula and in its delivery systems. It is making extensive use of information and communication technologies.

The convergence of communication and computer technologies has opened new avenues for the quantitative as well as qualitative improvement of education. It has strength enough to give cost effective solution to the ever expanding demand for higher education. Indeed this new revolution greatly facilitates the acquisition and assimilation of knowledge, and offers unprecedented opportunities to countries like India for qualitative and quantitative improvement of educational systems.

The World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris early in October 1998 under the auspices of the UNESCO provided a forum for extensive debates and exchange of views for the representatives of 182 Governments on the higher education we need for the 21st century. The Declaration of the World Conference said that since society is "increasingly knowledge based, higher

education and research now act as essential components of culture, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations". The development of higher education must therefore feature among the highest national priorities particularly in the context of globalization.

Access to higher education and concern for equity have been reaffirmed in the World Conference. Dwelling on the mission of higher education, the Conference has resolved that beyond its traditional functions of teaching, training, research and study, higher education should promote development of the whole person and train responsible and informed citizens committed to working for a better society.

The Task Force on Higher Education and Society convened by the World Bank and the UNESCO to bring together some of the world's foremost education and development experts has said in its report "Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise" that higher education is no longer a luxury; it is essential for survival.

Coming to the scenario of higher education in India, it may be said that there

has been remarkable progress both qualitative and quantitative in the field of higher education. There are 300 Universities and 15000 affiliated Colleges with 4.5 lakhs of teachers imparting higher education to about one crore young boys and girls. India is recognised at the international level as a nation providing value based training. Indian experts are considered as backbones in many science and technology revolutions taking place at global level. Indian youth have distinguished themselves in the fields of Computers, Information Technology, Electronics, Biotechnology, Pure Science, Economics, Finance Management and Social Sciences. The world now believes that trained Indian human power is of much superior quality and is of great significance. The Universalisation of job market and acceptance of Indian skills at the global level have opened opportunities for creation of new jobs internally. Further, the service sector and social sector in India are also expanding, calling for trained human power at various levels to meet our own demands.

In order to meet the growing demand for well trained graduates and post graduates equipped with knowledge and skills, there is imperative need for revamping higher education in the country.

Quality teaching at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels is the need of the hour. Quality teaching is possible only when

the colleges have well qualified faculty, capable of adopting innovative methods of teaching and promoting original thinking; research and work culture among the students; well equipped laboratories and well stocked libraries providing the latest knowledge and Information. Notwithstanding the developmental assistance extended by the UGC under different heads to the colleges, many colleges, particularly those in rural areas are lagging behind in providing the necessary infrastructure and other facilities as enumerated above.

Some colleges may have well equipped Labs and rich libraries but they may not have well qualified faculty. Some colleges may have well qualified faculty and may be lacking in other facilities. It is in this context that the concept of cluster of colleges mooted by the UGC for academic cooperation and achieving excellence gains in importance. The aim of cluster of colleges is to maximise the potential of each college by mutual cooperation and net working intellectually and physically. The different colleges coming under the cluster, work in cooperation with one another. It is quite possible that the best facilities made available in one college can be utilized to the maximum by the other colleges in the cluster. To be more specific the services of faculty members in one college who are exceptionally meritorious can be utilized by the other colleges for delivering guest lectures and for conducting seminars, symposia, workshops

etc., Another college may provide the best library in two or three disciplines and another in two or three other disciplines so that the best standard books and journals in different disciplines are available in the cluster for the benefit of the students and staff of all the constituent colleges both for acquisition of the latest knowledge and information and for carrying out research. In the same way some other colleges in the cluster may provide the best Laboratory facilities keeping an eye on avoiding duplication of equipment. So also in the case of sports facilities and extension activities. It is something like division of labour so as to enable all the colleges in the cluster to derive the maximum benefit out of such arrangement based on mutual consent. This arrangement helps all the colleges in the cluster achieve the goal i.e. academic excellence.

The optimum number of colleges in the cluster may be six. Colleges which are geographically close to one another may be brought under the cluster for the sake of convenience. The co-operation covers the services of the faculty, Lab and Library facilities, Sports facilities and also extension activities.

In order to implement the scheme effectively a steering committee with the Principals and Faculty Heads of the different colleges may be constituted with one of the colleges in the cluster identified as Lead

College to coordinate the academic and other activities of the cluster. The committee meets periodically and discusses the areas where mutual cooperation and help can be rendered. For this purpose, each college in the cluster may initially assess its own strengths and weaknesses to chalk out the future needs for collective sustenance and excellence.

The areas for cluster cooperation may be for joint research activities, sharing of laboratory, library and sports facilities, organising joint seminars, workshops and symposia, establishing career counseling and Employment Cell, arranging common Extension Lectures by reputed academicians and sharing of hostel facilities. It would be the responsibility of the committee to chalk out and finalise the programme of activities to be carried out by each college in the cluster.

It is common knowledge that most of the youth at under graduate, post graduate and professional levels are found to be woefully lacking in communication skills, particularly oral skills, which tells upon the prospects of decent employment. It is necessary for every college to train its students in communication skills. Language Laboratories play a vital role in this regard and colleges which do not have this facility can avail themselves of the facility provided in some of the colleges in the cluster or they can jointly establish Language Labs in two or three colleges for the benefit of the

students of all colleges in the cluster.

In order that due attention is paid to each of the different areas of cooperative endeavour, there may be sub committees such as:

-Research Sub Committee, Library Sub committee, Laboratory Sub Committee, Extension Activities Sub Committee and so on.

Each sub committee monitors the activities in the relevant area of cooperation.

Besides cooperative endeavour for academic excellence, the colleges in the cluster may jointly adopt villages for rural development programmes. They may jointly organize extension and out reach programmes in rural areas on an extensive scale. With the combined efforts of the students and staff of

the different colleges, the cluster can achieve things which individual colleges with their limited resources and man power cannot achieve. These extension programmes may include Adult Education and Eradication of Illiteracy, AIDS Awareness, Conservation of Water, Control of Environmental Pollution, Prevention of Communicable Diseases, Pre Natal and Post Natal Care, Nutrition and Health. These activities go a long way in inculcating the spirit of service among the students and in establishing a healthy rapport between the colleges and the rural population.

In conclusion I may say that the novel concept of cluster of colleges for academic cooperation and achieving excellence is a significant step forward in our endeavour to promote the cause of higher education. It is my earnest hope that the concept will take concrete shape and achieve the desired goals.

Just now I am living as the guest of an old lady in a village near Boston. I accidentally made her acquaintance in the railway station and she invited me to come over and live with her. I have an advantage in living with her, in saving for some time my expenditure of dollar a day and she has the advantage of inviting her friends and showing them a curio from India.

And all these must be borne - starvation, cold, hooting in the streets on account of my quaint dress. These are what I have to fight against. But my dear boy, no great things were ever done without labour.

- Swami Vivekananda in a letter to a disciple.

GROWTH OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE MARCH OF TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA

Dr. Y. V. S. S. Murty

At the time of Independence, industry in general and chemical industry in particular was not significant in the country with few units dotting the country here and there. There was a fairly large textile and jute processing industry apart from primary agro industries like rice milling, cotton ginning, flour mills and cane sugar factories. Most of the industries were based on imported plant and machinery and even whatever little technology was involved in these industries was imported.

The education system in the country was oriented to supply personnel for service mostly in the Government and a small percentage to the industry. Innovation and entrepreneurship was practically non-existent

The country was faced with severe problems of poverty, extreme food shortage, famines, poor agriculture output and uninhibited population growth. Big business houses like Tatas, Birlas, Dalmias dominated the steel, cement & paper industry. They had nurtured competent engineers and managers to run their industries, but the entrepreneurship did not spread beyond their families.

projects and agricultural research stations to increase the food production and productivity which made the nation self-sufficient in food requirements even after meeting the needs of the exploding population. The next objective of the Government was to hone the scientific and technological talent towards entrepreneurship by providing the necessary financial inputs and the infrastructure facilities. A number of schemes came on the anvil such as 50:50 equity participation in the project cost, seed capital, risk capital assistance and soft loans to the promoters. A number of industrial areas and industrial estates were built by the Government with power and water supply, roads and buildings.

Financial incentives were also provided and every effort was made to attract the technical people to set up industries particularly in the small and the medium scale sector. A massive drive was organized in all the States by setting up Industrial Development, Financial and Infrastructure Corporations which were autonomous bodies empowered to decide and finance the projects.

Immediately after independence the Government embarked on major irrigation

I was one of the earliest beneficiaries of such liberal financial packages in 1968 namely

** Prof. C. Chiranjivi Endowment Lecture delivered at Andhra University, Waltair on 10 Sept 2004*

a 50:50 joint venture with APIDC which promoted a Sodium Metal manufacturing unit, the first of its kind in the country and one of the five such units then in the world. The project was based on a claim by me that I would translate text book information into a commercial plant inspite of the well known fact that the process for the electrolytic production of Sodium Metal is a well guarded technology confined to the former war time powers. Such was the fervor with which technocrats were supported by the Government that this incredulous proposal by me was sanctioned as a joint venture.

In 1968, 5 joint ventures were launched, of which only the joint venture with me is surviving and the rest perished long long ago. I justified the trust the Corporation had in me. This in fact led to many more J. Vs and much more liberalized sanctions. In spite of many such concessions it had taken quite a few years for the technical personnel to opt to be an entrepreneur from secure "no risk" jobs. There were also some schemes in which the scientists were given a lean on their job for a period of 3 years along with a lump sum grant of Rs.25 Lakhs to set up an industry and make a success of it. If it failed, they could come back to their parent job.

The various schemes mentioned gained momentum between 1968-1975 and a number of small and medium scale industries came into existence. Quite a few of them perished, either because of inadequate

technical skills, managerial skills or inability to compete in the market, quality problems and also to some extent to the greed of the entrepreneur. None-the-less the success rate of the industries that came into existence was almost 20% which is a very decent achievement, considering that at start the entrepreneur man power resource was almost zero.

Between 1975 to 1985 there was a big spurt in the establishment of many industries particularly the chemical industries like pharmaceuticals, pharma intermediates, dyestuffs and textile auxiliaries which flourished due to protection from foreign competition by the imposition of heavy import duty, market assistance from the Government and easy access to project funds through public issues for which there was great response from the public.

Public sector undertakings which were set up by the Government in 1950's and 1960's like the giant steel factories, HEC, IDPL, HOC., Fertiliser factories, Petroleum Industry etc., were the breeding grounds for entrepreneurs. They also ensured availability of basic raw material for the growth of the industry and avoid excessive dependence on imported materials.

Thus, by early 1990's in A.P. alone 120 chemical and allied units, 30 drugs and pharmaceutical industries, 30 paper and pulp units, about 40 cement units, 140 food and

agriculture industries and 30 mineral based industries were in operation. This is a growth achieved in 30 years between 1960-1990.

Paper mills have increased their capacities from 5 M.T. per day to 200 Te per day. Cement industry was able to set up one million / 3 million tones per year plants. Fertilizer industry grew from 1 M.T. Ammonia per day to 1350 M.T. per day with 28 such factories in India. We find growth from a small 100,000 tones petroleum refinery in Assam to 5 to 8 million tones refinery in Koyali, Trombay, Vizag etc., and now 27 million tons refinery at Jamnagar.

Power generation which was hardly 100 MW in early 1950's has gone up to 4000 MW in mid 1990's and presently to 8000 MW in A.P. alone. Installed power generation capacity in India in 1947 was 1400 M.W. today it is 110,000 M.W. Coal output has risen from 40 million tones to 340 million tonnes. Post offices and railways are the largest net works in the world.

Satellite communication and information and satellites launching have also come into being. Space launch vehicles and space exploration units are now made in the country with indigenous technology. Ship building has grown to great heights, aircraft carriers and frigates are now being built in the country. Rolling stock and engines required for railways are all now made in the country and are even being exported. Electronic industry has developed phenomenally though still far

behind countries like China, Taiwan, Korea etc.

Thus the effort of the Government in encouraging the growth of entrepreneurship has been a success story. By the beginning of the 21st century the Government has considerably cut down on the many sops to the entrepreneurs, like assistance in equity participation, seed capital and risk capital assistance etc., and rightly so.

The right man and the right project only gets support. Supporting each and every project, some with even doubtful viabilities, is no longer the order of the day. Promoting projects at any cost and thus bringing about industrialization and entrepreneurship had a long innings of 40 years and has now almost come to an end.

Financial institutions are now tightening the screws. It is now a case of survival of the fittest, of the best quality, and the lowest cost. High standards of operation, maintenance and control of environmental and safety issues are the order of the day.

During this period also many industries perished for reasons earlier stated and also because of the advent of many who sought short cuts to success. However, most of the industries particularly pharma & pharma intermediate chemical industry embarked on vertical integration and capacity increase to cut costs of production and survive in the intense domestic competitive environment.

Problems of quality, safety and environment also started growing in proportion to the growth in capacities.

Companies of my group manufacturing several hazardous organic and inorganic chemicals, natural extract concentrates and a large no. of fine chemicals are well recognized in India and abroad in countries like Japan, Germany & USA as dependable high quality producers. **Excellence, excellence all the way, no compromise.** We are a recognized in-house R&D by the Ministry of Science and Technology. We hold certificates under ISO 9001, 14000, 18000, HACCP & cGMP. We are also an Export House.

Entrepreneurship and technology are on the march and have become the engine of growth and major source for employment in the country. Dependence on the Government and public sector for employment is on the decline.

While all this is a matter of great satisfaction and pride, it is necessary to note that the country has still a long way to go to become a developed nation and get back to the glory when 400 years ago it was the beacon light of the world. In the last 50 years atleast 3 out of every 1000 technicians, engineers and scientists in the country came into businesses industrial and service provider sector. Currently it is around 10 in thousand.

India would reach great eminence if even 5% of the brilliant and bright students

coming out of the colleges and universities become entrepreneurs, service providers and employers.

It is necessary here to point out that the biggest area for growth and opportunities is (1) the specialty chemicals and pharmaceutical intermediates (2) automobile ancillaries (3) I.T. sector and (4) and the farm sector which holds the greatest challenge. The production of bulk drugs and pharmaceuticals is slowly going out of reach of the average entrepreneur by the sheer scale of operation and market intensive nature of the industry. However, the pharmaceutical ingredients and specialty chemicals are still a vast virgin field in which innovation, quality and cost saving offer great opportunities to entrepreneurs. This is an area in which my group companies are now thriving.

Automobile manufacture and marketing is beyond the average entrepreneur. It is and will continue to be in the hands of giant corporates. However, the thousands of parts required for the automobiles have to be produced in the ancillaries where precision, quality and reproducibility are hallmarks for success the talent for which is abundant in the country. Today about 20% of the automobile ancillary industry is said to be in the hands of the Indian entrepreneurs.

I.T.: - This has seen tremendous growth in the last two decades but it is saddening to mention that inspite of the talent and large number of I.T. personnel working in India and

abroad most of them appear to be data processors only. Programmers are very few and software developers are still far less. These are the areas in which the I.T. engineers have to make greater impact. The hardware industry too is lagging far behind the other countries.

The growth of the entrepreneurship and the march of technology in the last 50 years are indeed very heartening. Thousands, nay, lakhs of engineers in various disciplines are pouring out of colleges and universities on which talent pool the country will have to march further on.

Farm sector: - Much has been done in the farm sector. However more has yet to be done. Bio-tech, genetic manipulation organic farming, increasing farm productivity, water conservation—these are challenges which the engineering and scientific community has to address.

Water: - In future there will be wars for water and not for land. We already have mini battles in the country between states for this precious commodity. Water conservation, recycling, prevention of pollution are the great challenges facing mankind.

Energy sector: - The energy crisis is bound to deepen more and more unless solutions are found. Our hopes are now on harnessing solar energy and hopefully we will succeed. A word of caution is now needed. There is great need to recognize that we as individuals and our country are entering into

the international arena as a developing / developed country. So are many other countries hitherto considered backward. Every country wants to use its resources as well as it can, and nurture its human talent as best as it can. Examples are Gulf countries, former Soviet countries, Malaysia, Singapore, Koreas, Taiwan, India and China.

Our mind set has to change. What we are facing is not technological obsolescence, but commercial obsolescence.

As they have plenty of cheap energy and hydrocarbons as resources it is not easy to compete with gulf countries in hydrocarbon industry or even in caustic soda chlorine industry. With vast sources of Iron ore and cheap energy available, the former Soviet countries can produce steel at far lower cost than any other country.

The shift is from massive low value, high volume products to high value low volume products. Change from steel to special steel and armaments. Change from chlorine production to chlorine based products. Shift from electro chemical and electro metallurgical primary products to down stream higher value products.

It is economic sense to shed the ancestral house and convert it into an apartment complex.

I followed this principle 15 years ago when I had given up voluntarily the manufacture of Sodium Metal, which I ran for

nearly 20 years, a much acclaimed pioneering effort, as the shortage and cost of power made the production uneconomic. I now import Sodium Metal from abroad (I am the largest importer and consumer of Sodium Metal) and produce several commercial products with higher value addition, such as Sodium Amide, Sodium Azide, Sodium Hydride, Sodium Alkoxides, HMDS Sodium, Amino pyridines, Tetrazoles etc., all based on Sodium Metal. I now have a basket of high value commercially viable products which are being exported to Japan, Germany and USA. We are continuously and constantly developing new products, and new markets, some of them brought into commercial production. Our recent entry into Natural extract concentrates,

such as Capsaicin pure, Curcumin pure, Solanesol 90% are some examples.

We are not averse to get out of production of any product when we face commercial obsolescence. Policy is to explore technology, move with the tide and times. There are today many such entrepreneurs like me, who are making success a habit.

In India, we have the competence, we have the knowledge. What we lack is dedication and enterprise which today is coming into its own.

I hope and pray that the youth will bring to the country greater glory and achievement.

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SHADY TREE

G. S. Rastogi

The seed of a rare plant entered my heart long ago,
Watered with blood and canopied with dreams,
No storm was strong enough to enter the ring
And disturb this tenderest of plants.

With loving care, freely I let it grow
In time it put on such a rich foliage,
Home to the cuckoo and other song birds,
A delight to the weary wayfarers.

Such enchanting sounds issue from this shady tree
That calm the mind and instill
Fresh energy to march ahead
And boldly face life's unchartered sea,
As smiling, I fought my battles long ago.

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SECULARISM IN INDIAN DEMOCRACY

M. Ramakrishnayya

To understand secularism, it is necessary to understand two other words, secular and secularise. While in economics, secular is used to describe a long term trend, in common parlance it connotes the opposite of sacred or religious. The word, 'secularise', indicates a process by which events are increasingly explained by means of rationality and not by reference to the divine or the scriptures. Secularism, therefore, means a set of beliefs and conduct that are based on non-religious, non-divine, non-sacred or rational grounds. According to Prof. T. N. Madan, the sociologist, secularism is 'the marginalisation of faith'. Historically speaking, the term secularism first came into use in the west after the Enlightenment, with a view to assert the separation of state from the church or religion. As a consequence, the states in most western democracies do not claim to have an 'official' religion as part of their constitutions.

However, it must be noted that the separation of state from religion could not be absolute. For example, in U.K., the King or the Queen is being designated as the Defender of the faith. There are also close links between the Government of U.K. and the Anglican church. It is interesting to recall Prince Charles's suggestion that the title should be changed to defender of faiths, so as to reflect

the presence of different faiths in the country. Further, there is the practice in U.K. and U.S.A. that oaths of office are often taken by the office-holders in the name of God, with a hand on the Bible. Although this practice can be explained away on the ground that the sanctity of the oath is inextricably linked to the faith of the oath-taker, it is clear that complete exclusion of the 'divine' has not been possible in the state's transactions. So long as the people are not completely secularised, some space has to be yielded to the 'sacred', without sacrificing the essence of secularism. In this context, it is useful to recall Pandit Nehru's reply to the query of the French Culture Minister in the fifties that his most difficult task was to practise secularism in a deeply religious society replete with all the religions of the world. It is interesting to note that the difficulty cited by Panditji became insurmountable in the other part of the subcontinent, Pakistan, and thus nullified the noble sentiments expressed by Jinnah in his inaugural speech on 14th August, 1947.

Perhaps, it was the awareness of the above-said difficulty that prompted the founding fathers of the Constitution not to include the word secular in the Preamble. They were content with some guarantees under Fundamental Rights viz., Article 25

(freedom of religion), Art. 26 (freedom to manage religious institutions), Art. 27 (No tax for promoting particular religion), Art. 28 (No religious instruction in state funded institutions), and Art. 29 & 30 (Rights of religious minorities). The term secular was introduced by a constitutional amendment in 1976, along with the term 'socialist' during the Emergency. Although these new terms were left in tact, when after the Emergency some other amendments were nullified, they have become controversial. The word 'socialist' has become anomalous after the adoption of the policy of economic liberalisation, leading to bold exercises in interpretation. The other term secular has led to even greater confusion. Some political parties which call themselves secular have begun to denounce others as non-secular, religious, communal or fundamentalist. The latter parties claim to be truly secular and describe the former as pseudo-secular. The name-calling has reached the stage where an organisation close to Sangh Parivar has recently thought fit to launch a magazine called Secularism Combat. The title has perhaps been chosen to position it against another magazine called Communalism Combat. There is also the argument that the essence of Indian secularism should be derived from its own cultural milieu and traditions and not from its Western origins and practices.

Despite the various controversies surrounding the term, there is a consensus, as evident from the pronouncements of leaders

in high positions, that the main ingredients of Indian secularism must be : (a) equal respect for all religions, by the state, and (b) respect by all citizens for all religions other than their own. Mark the omission of the word equal in (b). Obviously the followers of a particular religion can not reasonably be expected to show respect to another religion in an equal measure. Usually, secularism is translated into Sanskrit-influenced Indian languages as Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava. Some prefer to substitute 'Dharma' by 'Pantha' or 'Matha', as in their opinion Dharma has several connotations, and cannot be equated squarely to the English word religion. In particular, when Dharma is understood as duty or as the thing that sustains society, some confusion is likely to be caused. Thus we are still to find a fully acceptable and non-controversial phrase that conveys the idea of secularism to the common people who do not know English. Another phrase, Dharma Nirapekshata that has been used so far has created misunderstandings. One of its meanings is negligence of dharma in all its connotations. As in Hindi, dharma is equated to religion, secularism has come to mean irreligiousness to some. Further many have come to believe that the banning of religion as a subject in any form or shape in state-approved curriculum of schools and colleges has resulted in denial of genuine knowledge to the young about an important and ever-present social force. It has also given a licence to sectarian teachers in the minority institutions protected by the

constitution as well as parents to poison the minds of the young against religions other than their own. How can the young learn to respect others' religions, if they are not taught essentials of all religions and the justification for respecting them? Important values that sustain society (the original concept of dharma) have been excluded from the curricula on the ground that their roots were linked to religious practices and tradition. Recent attempts to include some values in the curriculum, albeit on the basis of the Report of a Parliamentary Committee, have been thwarted by the self proclaimed secularists in the name of secularism.

The above discussion should convince all reasonable persons about the need for considering the attributes of secularism in the Indian context. The following propositions are offered to help a suitable final formulation:

(1) The Indian state has no official religion and the sovereignty rests with the people, unlike in some constitutions which invoke God as the repository of sovereignty.

(2) The sovereign people who have guaranteed freedom of religion as a Fundamental Right have proclaimed that the state shall show equal respect to all religions and that every citizen shall respect the religions of others as a Fundamental Duty. In short,

Sarva Pantha Sama Bhava.

(3) Nothing in the propositions (1) and (2) shall militate against the state functionaries and dignitaries following the rituals of their particular religions while performing their constitutional duties (e.g., oath taking, dedication to nation etc.), whenever such functions demand the invocation of God. While no person shall have a right to raise objection on grounds of religion, care must be taken by the organisers of such functions not to cause offence to the practitioners of religions other than that of the performing functionary or dignitary.

(4) The state shall be competent to spend money out of the consolidated fund for assisting selected religious functions of a particular religion, provided such expenditure is directed to help the poor only among the followers of that religion and that as far as possible an equal treatment is given to the requests of the followers of other religions. Aid to pilgrims for Haj or visiting Manasarovar are examples to point. Expenditure on collateral arrangements such as law and order, public health etc., are anyhow the direct responsibility of the state, irrespective of the religious colour or significance of the event.

(5) As the Fundamental Rights are subject to the demands of public order, morality and public health, the state shall have

the right to monitor, supervise and regulate by law the activities of all religious institutions in non-religious matters and affairs undertaken in connection with a particular religion.

(6) The state shall not encourage, recognise or support any social, economic or political institution which in terms of its constitution excludes from its membership or clientele followers of any particular sect or religion.

(7) The state shall enable its citizens, particularly the young ones, to imbibe sufficient knowledge about the essential features of different religions and related matters, so as to ensure that they develop respect for all of them as required by the Fundamental Duties laid down by the Constitution.

(8) As regards the citizens and the civil society at large, Sarva Pantha Sama Bhava would have the following implications:

(a) to learn to respect the religious sentiments of others;

(b) to exercise restraint in the practice and performance of religious rituals, festivals and other congregational events;

(c) to participate to the maximum extent possible in important cultural events which may have their origins in one religion or the other;

(d) to temper the exercise of so called religious rights with the constitutional duty of communal harmony;

(e) to introspect over historical memories so as to avoid the exaggeration of victories of one's religious group over another in the past

and the urge for revenge against past wrongs, real or imaginary, committed by one religious group against another; in short, to practise the virtues of remorse and forgiveness;

(f) to avoid as far as possible violent reactions to derogatory acts, real or imaginary, that are reported to have been committed against one's fellow religionists by other religionists somewhere, particularly those outside our country, on the ground of religious solidarity;

(g) to play down references to provocative statements in one's religious books and to emphasise the reconciliatory statements in the same books during religious rituals or lectures, particularly in times of turmoil;

(h) to establish local committees of representatives of different religions in order to monitor the observance of the above principles and to resolve, in a spirit of goodwill, the disputes that may arise from time to time;

(i) to avoid the formation of vote banks and the practice of voting in elections on the basis of religion, sect or caste; and

(j) to speed up the process of secularisation, that is to reduce reliance on the sacred for understanding or undertaking events and increase the reliance on science or rationality. Development of scientific spirit is one of the Fundamental Duties under Article 51-A of the Constitution.

*



SHOCK

Story by Khaja Nizamuddin

Translated by Rafat Farzana

He was fed up....fed up with Indian vicinity, Indian living. An opening of a daily newspaper could convince anyone, why he was fed up with India, future of India. Take any newspaper, in how so ever good mood one might be, a reading would grow in one, frustration- 'Pesticides residues in soft drinks', 'Excise officer caught after retirement for his disproportionate property and wealth', 'Junior doctors on strike', 'S.B.H. official held for helping big money D.D. Gang', '3 lakhs of gold looted'. 'S.I. in ACB trap, 'An actor abducted by Sandalwood Brigand', 'Sachin Tendulkar out for one', 'Judge held for running prostitution', 'D.I.G. caught red handed', 'I.A.S. officer's D.N.A. proves his illicit relations with a Social Worker', 'An actor caught for flesh trade', 'Pubs raided and 17 dancers arrested for obscene dances and nudity', 'Minister's hand in aircraft deal', 'An airforce officer raped a student', 'President's security men raped a girl', 'S.C. hostel girl commits suicide', 'A twenty eight years old woman burnt alive by her in-laws', 'two naxalites killed in an encounter', 'Lecturer held in malpractice', 'Communal riots flare up, a pregnant woman raped and killed, houses burnt, police remained a silent observer', 'Court set culprit free as witness turned hostile'. 'Minister held for murder of a pregnant poet', 'Fake currency racket busted', 'Fake stamp scam. Ministers held'.

He was hopeless about the future of his young generation here in India. He decided

to make his sons engineers and send them to U.S.A....He makes every attempt to make his son's mind to be up to that.

His son completed his B. Tech. He wrote GRE., TOEFEL. He got good marks in IELTS. Good amount in bank helped his son get a study visa so he flew to U.S.A. His son joined M. S. and to meet the expenses he joined part time services at two places. He joined a bakery and worked there for two hours. He worked in shoe company two hours in the evening to make some more money. Thus he earned enough to meet the expenses of his studies.

He was very happy because his son followed the tradition in U.S.A. and was not depending on him for his studies on parents like Indian boys. He received E-Mail everyday so he was very happy. He was very happy because his son was away from Indian vicissitudes.

One day he got up from bed and went to see the Indian newspaper all uninterested. As he saw the paper he was shocked. With trembling fingers he held the paper and he could hardly read the news under the photo of his son, '.....was murdered by two unidentified men who demanded money, and killed an Indian engineer when he could not fulfil their demand.'

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STUDY TOUR BY WILD ANIMALS TO HUMAN CIVILIZATION CENTRES

DR .I. Achyuta Rao

We all visit Zoo-parks and animal/bird sanctuaries as a source of entertainment to our children. Besides, it is a means to enhance our own knowledge of WILD LIFE and NATURE. Further, we visit LIVE FORESTS for the sake of improving our understanding further.

With the passage of time and the progress of evolution, wild animals and birds of a forest decided to go on a study tour of a few typical Human Civilization Centres (HCCs). They meticulously planned their tour and systematically executed the same with the help of some humans. Fish could not participate for obvious reasons.

Before start of the tour, all the tourists were briefed about the details of the tour and the code of conduct to be observed. At the end of the tour they went back to their forest and assembled to discuss various issues concerning human civilization, under the wise chairmanship of the ELEPHANT.

The positive aspects are many, which need considerable space for narration. Let us skip them. Some of the negative aspects are briefly presented below as an eye-opener to the HUMAN RACE.

The MS-Study Tour of HCC by the multi-species was conducted during day time

only. Open-air Lodging was provided for the nights only, in the nearest forest earmarked for each HCC. All tourist species had to adjust to these timings. It was agreed that during the Tour, they should not eat/harm each other or other living beings in the HCCs. During the night stay, the tourists could have their own natural food, available in the forest. No special kitchens, Dining Halls or toilets were needed.

The transportation from one lodge to another was in specially designed buses. The seats in the buses were ergonomically designed to suit individual tourists. So, the seats were not interchangeable. Besides, the seats for abnormal body configurations were so located as to avoid toppling of the vehicles about any axis. Small size animals/birds were invariably provided with upper berths. The transportation from the lodge to the HCC and back was by means of special trailers for small groups of tourists of like sizes and weights. In special cases individualised vehicles were provided.

The tourists could use the ultra-modern computerised INSTANT TRANSLATION DEVICES (ITDs) for communication with humans or other animals/birds. For development of the Software required for translations from one sign language to another in the ITDs, cooperation from humans was availed. The tourists could record their

observations in their own language; in the manory of PORTABLE RECORD AND REPLAY EQUIPMENTS (PRARE) carried by them.

DISCUSSION ON ISSUES

1) FREEDOM

Chairman ELEPHANT: Man speaks so much about "Freedom for all". But he does not mean it in actual practice.

LION: He puts wild animals in cages for human entertainment.

EAGLE: He puts various wild birds also in cages.

FLAMINGO: He does not spare even the most beautiful fish!

CRANE and DUCK: He confines them to aquaria, for his drawing room decoration. Or exhibition at beaches.

GORILLA: My God, he takes even fellow human beings as SLAVES on one pretext or other.

CHIMPANJEE: He imprisons under-trial suspects indefinitely, without bringing them to justice.

MONKEY: The third degree methods employed by the police are inhuman.

FOX: The treatment given to the prisoners of war is unmentionable.

CROW: No doubt, Man is wilder than the so-called wild animals.

HIPPO: Rich and powerful countries do not recognise and respect the freedom of the

poorer and the weaker countries.

WOLF: They attack them on flimsy grounds and subjugate them to grab their valuable resources.

RHINO: Even within the same country, wealthy and powerful people rule over the poor and the downtrodden.

PEA-COCK: One prime-minister of a country had the audacity to comment "The Poor do not know what they want!" Isn't it funny?

SWAN: A queen of another country once remarked "If the poor do not have bread to eat, let them HAVE cakes!"

HORSE: Even in the so-called democracies, people do not have the freedom to elect their own leaders in a fair manner.

RABBIT: Money and power dictate their choice.

2) KINDNESS

ELEPHANT (Chairman): Man preaches "Kindness to all Living Beings" but does not demonstrate that in practice.

BUFFALO: While taking us buffalos and birds to slaughter houses, we are treated as inanimate objects, insensitive to pain and suffering.

COCK: We are put to untold torture for hours together before death.

OX: Anasthesia and pain killers are not given for the strange logic that "they are any how going to die" Will they treat their kin like this?

DONKEY: Even a fellow human being is not treated kindly unless some personal benefit is

expected of him.

OWL: Even old parents are not looked after kindly by their own children, now a days.

RAT: Environmental education is essential to appreciate the requirements of animal welfare.

COW: The unkindest cut of all is the merciless treatment meted out to the FEMALE of the human species.

HEN: Extermination of Female foetus is the ultimate blow to human civilisation.

VULTURE: Bride burning, acid throwing, kidnapping, rape, FGM are other aspects of human culture.

LEOPARD: Human Ethics is to be taught from the beginning.

HYENA: Our so called Wild animals and birds kill their prey for food only. What is wild about that?

SNAKE: But man kills other living beings for fun or sport or money.

FROG: Animal Experiments carried out by humans are IN HUMAN! We are the worst affected.

BABOON: Torturing or killing mute animals and birds for the benefit of improving human health is ridiculous and ludicrous.

DEER: Some animals like us are killed for getting the hide, horns, ivory etc.,

PEA-COCK: And birds for their multi-coloured plumage are used to decorate man's

abode.

3) HABITAT

ELEPHANT(Chairman): The natural habitats of wild animals and birds are destroyed to accommodate unchecked increase in human population.

KITE: Why not build fly-overs over natural habitats? What are their engineers doing?

4) ECO-BALANCE

ELEPHANT(Chairman): Animals have a single breeding season. Man has no such restriction. It is shameful.

CROCODILE: Uncontrolled dominance of only one species definitely leads to collapse of the eco-system ultimately.

PELICAN: Let there be fair competition between man and other species for survival!

COBRA: Selfishness of man is destroying the NATURAL BALANCE. It soon destroys him also.

PARROT: Environmental Education is the need of the hour for human survival. Why don't they introduce it in school curriculum.

BEAR : Deforestation causes loss of natural abodes to wild life. It diminishes the rainfall in the neighbourhood, adversely affecting all lives.

It is common sense.

5) CORRUPTION

ELEPHANT(Chairman): Corruption has pervaded all the three organs of the State viz., Executive, Legislature, Judiciary.

WOODPECKER: Even with the progress of civilization, corruption is not leaving the human world.

CAT: There are some cases where courts of justice themselves are rendering injustice to the innocent litigants.

RAT: All are "not equal" in the eyes of law! Our jungle law is better.

DOVE: While political criminals go scot-free, the small fry are punished for no fault of theirs.

FLAMINGO: "Justice delayed is Justice denied" remains an empty slogan. No effort is made to correct the situation.

ASS: Some body said "Law is an ass". It is an insult to us.

LIZARD: There are strikes and corruption cases in hospitals also, where removal of human suffering is the motto.

7) DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIES:

ELEPHANT(Chairman): Man spends a huge amount of resources, effort and time for research in frontier areas.

HEN: Development should be around. Unless basic needs of men and other living beings are

met, there is no point in going for research on galaxies, universe etc.

GOAT: Priorities need a re-look.

SPARROW: He is now creating a situation of chaos and destruction

APE: Terrorism, Kidnapping, strikes and violent agitations, murders etc., are found amongst humans only. Wild animals and birds do not resort to such meaningless activities.

DEER: They are socially harmful also.

OWL: Man rears pet animals and birds, whom he kills later as food on festive occasions. Wild animals and birds do not store live food (prey) for future use.

PELICAN: Man uses WMDs which destroy not only the enemy but also all the living beings.

SWALLOW: including vegetation around the site.

CROW: Where is man taking this LIVE EARTH by his destructive actions?

CROCODILE: Man should lay greater stress on study of Evolution rather than galaxies and Universe!

CONCLUSION: THIS article functions as a negative feedback to the "most intelligent species" for timely correction, before it leads to the definite collapse of the Bio-sphere.

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SIR ARTHUR COTTON – A NOBLE WORK OF GOD

A. V. Appa Rao

‘Colonel Cotton’s name will be venerated by millions yet unborn, when many, who occupy a much larger place in the public view, will be forgotten, but, although, it concerns not him, it would be, for our own sake, a matter of regret if Colonel Cotton were not to receive due acknowledgement during his life time’—such was the tribute paid by Sir Charles Trevelyan, Governor of Madras in the year 1858, by which year Sir Arthur Cotton completed the Godavari anicut works at Dowlaiswaram and the results of Irrigation channels and Navigation canals started flowing there after...And that fulfilled the augury of making the district the ‘granary of the South,’ following the success of irrigating the lands in Tanjore district by taming the Coleroon river, by Cotton, the engineering wizard.

About the time when the British dominion in India was attaining its zenith there was born in the family of Baron Sir Lynch Cotton of Cheshire, England, on 15th May 1803 a baby boy. The boy was his tenth grandson, who in course of time, was destined to rise to the rank of a General in the field of Military Engineering, with a difference that his campaigns were aimed at conquering the hearts of the people of South India through gigantic irrigation schemes designed and built

by him across some of the principal rivers such as Cauvery, Krishna and Godavari.

A remarkably intelligent boy, he was able to obtain a cadetship for India, at the age of 15, and joined the military seminary at Addiscombe, where the cadets intended for the Artillery and Engineer Service of the East India Company then received education. So well had Arthur worked at Addiscombe that he obtained appointment in the Royal Engineers without having to undergo any examination, perhaps the only instance of admission in the Scientific Corps of the Royal Engineers.

Lieutenant Cotton started his career with Ordinance survey in Wales in Jan. 1820, and presented an admirable report for which he received high praise. In May 1821, he was appointed to service in India, when he was just 18, and embarked for Madras and reached there after a voyage of 4 months. He was attached to the office of the Chief Engineer for the presidency and after nearly a year, he was appointed as an Assistant to the Superintending Engineer of the Tank department, Southern Division. The period from 1822 to 1827 was spent partly in the Tank Irrigation department and partly on military duties, notable among them being the

First Burmese war, which took Cotton to Rangoon, Tennasserim and Mergui. On his return from Burma he was ordered to make a marine survey of the Paumben passage between India and Ceylon.

On reporting himself, after arrival in Madras, Lieut. Cotton was appointed to act as Superintending Engineer Central division, Tank department. His duties were the inspection and repair of irrigation works. He was appointed to the separate charge of the Cauvery irrigation, which formed part of the Southern division. After eight years of service he was promoted to the rank of Captain. He made a special study of the needs of the Tanjore district and the moods of the Coleroon river. Having got the work started Captain Cotton had perforce to surrender to repeated attacks of jungle fever and obtained sick leave to Europe.

His visit to Tasmania on this occasion was destined to have important consequences upon the whole of his after life, there he was to find the partner of his remaining years, the true, the loving, the cherished, companion in Miss Elizabeth Learmonth. Their marriage took place in October 1841. After another year and a half, spent in the fine climate of Tasmania, Captain and Mrs. Cotton returned to India, their voyage made happier by the presence of a little daughter, two months old.

A narrative of the sequence of events that led to the completion of Delta works on the Godavari and Krishna gives us a clear picture

of Sir Arthur Cotton's great contribution to the welfare and well being of the people of the coastal districts.

In 1832-33, a terrible famine ravaged the coastal districts and the country had only partly recovered from the effects of this disaster when the three unfavorable years 1835 to 1838 were followed by the calamities of 1838-39 and 1840-41. The decreasing population and more than that, the dwindling revenue now forced the Government into action. Sir Henry Montgomery the Collector of Tanjore district was deputed to Rajahmundry district to inquire into the causes of the rapid decline of the district and to advise remedial measures. On the advice of Sir Henry Montgomery, the Madras Govt. acted at once and deputed Capt A. Cotton who studied and located the problem to the gross neglect of irrigation in the district and sent his report in the year 1844 urging the taking up of the Godavari Anicut scheme. Cotton started the work in 1847 with estimates of 47, 557-Sterling pounds.

With labour mostly unskilled, and a primitive apparatus, a small but able band of Assistants laboured with Cotton in the sweltering heat of the Godavari delta.

Major Cotton devised an ingenious method for the construction of the four arms of the anicut connecting the islands in between, without a prototype earlier for making any study. He made use of the locally available

materials, such as rubble stone, freshly made bricks, hydraulic lime, timber etc. The conveyance of materials from the quarry to the river bank was by an improvised Tramway and bullock carts. For ferrying across the river, locally made boats in good number were deployed. The brick and lime kilns were kept burning for about two months, yielding the required quantities for the whole year. The local manpower were well molded for the work and made use of by him

The labour rates then paid would be of interest to know in the present context of inflated economy. A man mazdoor was paid one anna (present 6 paise), a woman mazdoor was paid three fourths of an anna (About 5 paise) and two and two thirds annas (16 paise) for the skilled labour including carpenters, masons, black-smiths etc; The entire project was completed by 1852 which means in six seasons where as the present day projects of similar magnitude are extending to decades with all the modern equipment and improved technical knowledge. Arthur Cotton had an efficient and highly motivated team of engineers to work with him. Mr. Veenam Veeranna was one such local overseer. Major Cotton was always available at work-site even during the hot days and also nights for providing any kind of advice required by his staff. He was very kind to his staff. While appreciating the good services rendered by Mr. Veeranna, the only Indian Overseer, Major Cotton said, "Mr. Veeranna has been gifted with exceptional

qualification for conducting engineering operations as well as for directing and managing large bodies of native labour. If we had not found an Indian of this remarkable qualification, I don't see how the works could have been executed for no European could have supplied his place and no Indian equal to him has appeared." Then Mr. Veeranna was promoted as Sub-Engineer with the title of 'RaiBahadur'.

The Economic method of construction of anicuts on pure sand which originated with Cotton, has influenced the design of the other similar hydraulic works in the Madras Presidency, and was the result of Cotton's appreciation of the old native engineers in India. The Godavari project as a whole was completed in the year 1855. With the completion of this undertaking, Arthur Cotton may be said to have reached the pinnacle of his fame. Later, another anicut across River Krishna was constructed, on the same lines, by Capt. Orr, (Cotton's assistant) based on the design formulated by Cotton. The work was started in 1851 and was completed by 1855; by constructing a dam of 15ft height across the gorge.

It was a wonderful achievement by Arthur Cotton in converting the areas as it did, areas susceptible to famines into one of the richest tracts in India. In 1858, he came forward with still more ambitious proposals covering almost the whole of India. He recommended the

construction of irrigation and navigational canal system starting from Rajmahal on the Ganges upto Haridwar and another system linking Godavari and Krishna upto Madras and then the west coast contemplating a navigable line, 4000 miles in length, from Karachi by Cawnpore, Calcutta and Cuttack to Bhatkal, Mangalore and Madras. "There is not a single obstacle to this", he wrote "and the results would be far beyond calculation".

Arthur Cotton was knighted in 1861, in which year he left India, though he returned as an Engineering Adviser in 1862 and 1863. His work in India was so much appreciated by the Govt. of the day that Her Majesty the Queen was pleased to confer upon him the honour of K.C.S.I.

Arthur Cotton's mind was ever busy studying the problems of the Indian rivers with a view to improving the lot of the Indian peasant. It was his dream that India should become a land overflowing with milk and honey. He was not against the Railways in India but he strongly advocated the efficacy and the top priority for water storage reservoirs for production of food in the famine ridden country and for alleviation of poverty through irrigation and navigation.

Even though designated, a civil Engineer, Arthur Cotton was a man of versatile parts and had a wonderful grasp of almost everything falling within the domain of a civil

Engineer. His plea for a Sea Port for Rajahmundry and a large project for making a natural harbour at Vizagpatam, by a single break-water run out from the bold promontory of the Dolphin's nose, south of the town, shows his penchant and knowledge of port and harbour engineering.

As the adage goes, mediocre spirits generally condemn everything that exceeds their small stature. So to say, with all the achievements to his credit Sir Arthur Cotton, experienced difficulties from official sources. The reason is attributed to the lack of sympathy with his high aims and the total absence of appreciation of what irrigation really was in itself.

He had to appear as a witness before the parliamentary committee! But the hostile questions put to him never once caused him embarrassment; On the contrary they served to bring out in more striking manner his wonderful mastery of all the details of varied needs in wholly dissimilar localities.

Sir Arthur Cotton's plans for the restoration of prosperity to India found adequate expression in his replies and justification for the act of justice to the suffering people of India and as an ample proof of his foresight and character. He thus shared the pain of the race whom he served, and also proved that he has not lived his life bare and idle. He was so far ahead of his times in his

mission for irrigation that the HINDU newspaper from Madras paid tributes to his vision in an article published in 1900, stating that the only calculated measure against the possibility of the occurrence of famines is the storing up of large quantities of water in spacious and deep reservoirs as advocated by Sir Arthur Cotton.

“His life has been one that was inspired by Love and guided by knowledge as Bertrand Russel put it in a particular context There is truth in what Sir Richard Sankey said about him: “His works.....have already saved thousands of lives, and will continue to do so as long as the world lasts”—

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SEA

Ms. Gargi Saha

Water, Water everywhere
 Immeasurable depth as a human mind
 Colourless, multifarious
 Green, white, blue
 Big Rise
 small Rise
 Big Fall
 small Fall
 sea unravels
 As destiny
 As sea changes its course
 So does destiny
 New hopes wrapped in past despair
 Come rallying forth
 Like a rainbow of shells
 And the glitter of golden bangles
 What is man
 Before the fathomless, boundless sea.

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THE BOX

Heather Kathleen Kendall

My heart lies locked in yonder box
 Filled with results of all
 I've fought
 To love and die for
 Live and vie for
 Now I've but a shell
 to cry for-
 All the pleasures
 all the pains
 all the small unworldly gains
 that keepeth me
 Sometime to learn
 which way the simple key
 will turn.

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CHILD-BRIDES IN R. K. NARAYAN'S FICTION

I. Satyasree

R. K. Narayan, in most of his novels, presents the social milieu of his times. Although he was not a crusader for the abolition of child marriages and of widow-remarriages, he does condemn child marriages that were in vogue in our country. Child marriages were one of the several social evils that prevailed in India till the beginning of the nineteenth century. Owing to the tireless efforts of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidya Sagar, Kandukuri Veeresalingam and Gandhiji, this social evil was controlled, if not eradicated from the Indian soil. It is interesting to note that Gandhiji too admitted that his marriage was a child marriage and he looked upon his wife as a playmate. R. K. Narayan, through his fiction, draws our pointed attention to the social conditions and superstitions that existed during his period.

Narayan, in his novels 'The Bachelor of Arts', 'The Painter of Signs', 'The World of Nagaraj' and 'The Grand Mother's Tale' vividly portrays the plight and predicament of child-brides in India. Most of the brides in his fiction are under sixteen and Bala, the protagonist in 'The Grand Mother's Tale', is perhaps the youngest of them all. She is just seven when she is married and Viswa, the groom is ten!

Bala's father, one fine day, suddenly announces that her wedding is fixed for the next week. Young Bala is playing with her friends in the street at that time and she innocently asks him, "Why?" He does not reply. Her friends tease her and she gets irritated. She goes to her mother and declares that she does not want to marry. The mother convinces her saying that she has reached marriageable age. Bala, being only seven years old, does not quite understand what marriage is.

However, according to the existing social customs of those days, parents believed that a girl should get married before she attained puberty. Bala is no exception to this. She is neither physically nor mentally prepared for a wedding. But the parents did not take these things into consideration when they performed the marriage of the girl child. In the initial days of marriage, Bala is a totally confused bride. She is too shy and timid to even look at the groom. The Grand Mother's Tale is the story of Narayan's great grand mother, Bala, who lived during the pre independent era. The novel has an autobiographical note in it. Narayan writes about Bala's wedding.

"She was just seven when she was

married, her husband being just ten years old. Those were the days of child marriages, generally speaking.”

The same kind of situation is presented by Narayan in ‘The Bachelor of Arts’. This condition prevailed even in 1937 when he published this novel. Chandran’s mother expresses her displeasure when she comes to know that the would-be-bride is sixteen. She admonishes her son.

“Sixteen!” mother screamed, “They can’t be all right if they have kept the girl unmarried till sixteen. She must have attained puberty ages ago. They can’t be all right. We have a face to keep in this town. Do you think it is all child’s play?”

These words show that it was a social stigma if the parents kept the girl child at home beyond the age of ten or eleven. They were criticized by their relatives and neighbours if a girl was not married off before she reached puberty. Narayan presented this social scenario in his fiction to mirror the contemporary social conditions of our country.

Marriage is the most important thing in the life of a girl. Ironically, no one bothered to discuss this crucial issue with the girl child. She was neither consulted nor was given any choice. However, R. K. Narayan’s child-brides openly discuss their predicament and act as his mouth-pieces to reflect his social

awareness. Daisy in ‘The Painter of Signs’ narrates her bridal interview thus,

“Although I was only thirteen, I had my own notions of what was good for me and what I should do in life.”

From Daisy’s words, we understand that she too was in her early teens when she faced her bridal interview. Teenage is no age for marriage!

A child-bride will not have the psychological maturity to understand the requirements and demands of a marriage. Yet, the tradition-oriented and custom-bound Indian orthodox society has laid this condition on her and made it a painful ritual to be followed scrupulously by all parents.

Nagaraj, in ‘The World of Nagaraj’ becomes nostalgic as he remembers quite vividly the day of his bride-inspection. His wife, Sita, was a timid little creature when he married her, says the author. He adds,

“When he went to approve his bride at their house in Sullivan street, she looked so small and helpless. At first he was discouraged. He was under twenty and she was fourteen and looked as if she had just come out of the nursery school. Her personality had not yet developed.”

R. K. Narayana’s bride, Rajam, too was

hardly twenty when he married her. It is pathetic to note the plight of a small girl, who is underdeveloped, yet has to undergo the rigours and responsibilities of a marriage. Her physical growth and mental development are not taken into consideration at all. Narayan presents this scenario in his works to mirror the Indian social conditions. It shows his social consciousness, reformist zeal and deep concern for the Indian child-brides. His sympathies were certainly with the girl child and this is evident in his works.

Ironically, we observe that, this condition still exists in India even in this new millennium. Recently Ms. Shakuntala Verma, an anganwadi worker from Dhar district, was attacked and grievously injured by a youth on May 10, 2005, for her attempts to stop child marriages. She was campaigning against child

marriages. Her arms were chopped and slashed as she went to a village to ask a villager to give up the idea of marrying off his minor daughters. This gruesome incident which happened in our country, in the 21st century, shocked the entire nation. It drew the attention of the print and electronic media and everyone condemned this brutal attack. The Women's Organisations raised their voices requesting the Government to be sensitive to the issue of atrocities against women.

Although we proudly declare that social evils are eradicated from our country, child marriages are still being performed in some parts of India even today. It is time to give a serious thought to the problem and put a stop to this social evil.

*

DOG-EXPERIENCE

Jayanta Bhattacharya

I stand at the window
and look outside.....
There are no leaves on the trees
and no waters in the soil
It's a bleak and cheerless atmosphere
wherefrom I hear in the distance
a dog beginning to bark...
It barks and barks
and nothing can stop it barking...

I try to catch the scene
and in a flash of mind
get the ultimate phrasal signal:
The dog is protesting against
the limitations of dog-life
and saying in its barking:
Go to the edges and push -
the universe is waiting for you
to open a little more...

*

ON VALUE – BASED EDUCATION

G. Somaseshu

("Education is the process of Individual mind getting its full possible development").

-Dr. Zakir Hussain

In the present era of globalisation there is so much hue and cry about the need for inducing values in every field. Every profession and activity possesses a value in different degrees in terms of materialistic, moralistic and spiritual dimensions.

Value may be considered as a means to attain a certain goal. History is a process of realising values in human life. Values constitute an important part of culture. Values form an important element of our nature and personality.

In the present context the term value denotes an ethical meaning which in broad sense helps in promoting personal and social welfare and development in general.

A society without values disintegrates and perishes soon. Values act as the foundation stone for institutions to survive in the changing world. Values are context - based and serve as guiding principles of life to which people are emotionally committed. Values are transmitted through social activities (meetings, parties and discussions), class rooms, religious

places and functions (Festivals, ceremonies and rituals), media (T.V. radio and films etc.) and through books. There are different types of values such as political values, social values, moral values, professional values, individual values and artistic values etc.

Broadly speaking, the values which are constant and broad in their applicability are called universal or core values such as satya (Truth) Ahimsa (Non-violence), Shanti (Peace) Kshama (Tolerance), Dharma (Righteous conduct) and Prema (Love). The values which change from time to time and place to place are called peripheral values such as manners and procedures to be followed in various occupations and professions.

Many organisations have evolved a code of conduct (a set of principles) and organised training camps to inculcate suitable ethical values and desirable patterns of behaviour. In management field also, values are considered a vital component of working of efficiency and professional competence. But too much competition leads to erosion of values. Commercialisation, a shift from service oriented to profit-oriented motives, results in degradation of values. The powerful invasion of foreign cultures also leads to deterioration of values. Interpersonal relationships (Mutual

help, friendly feelings and team work), strengthen value systems where as pure business and professional relationships weaken the values.

In the field of education teachers and management have an important role to play to promote values along with imparting of knowledge. The influence of teachers is quite considerable on learners; as such, they should take their profession as a valuable opportunity to inculcate values both by their own behavior and by instruction. Some of the values that may be cultivated among the learners are: 1. Regular attendance 2. Courteous manners 3. Self-thinking 4. Honesty 5. Concern for others' feelings 6. Tolerance 7. control over emotions 8. Use of decent and polite language 9. Service motive 10. Respect for elders 11. Sense of patriotism 12. Respect for culture 13. Originality, Innovative and creative skills 14. Respect for law and regulations 15. Faith in God 16. Optimistic outlook 17. sense of responsibility 18. Willingness to do hard work and adapt oneself to changing conditions 19. Willingness to give up bad habits 20. Thirst for knowledge and self improvement.

Our Government also realised the importance of values in educational set-up and introduced relevant steps to promote values among learners.

The Kothari Commission Report (1964) viewed education as a means of national

integration and social change.

The National Commission for Education in 1956 showed much concern about erosion of values in the society, and re-adjusted the curriculum to foster values in educational institutions. In 1997 the U.N.O. stressed values in education especially values like tolerance, truthfulness, justice and solidarity.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee in its report says "All educational effort is aimed at value development" and "the purpose of value education is to strengthen the right bonds, and weaken the wrong ones."

Thus the importance of values is very much recognised as education is a social investment of human capital for the sake of individuals as well as social betterment in all aspects.

So to enhance the values, man should make proper use of knowledge for the welfare and benefit of mankind. He should curb his destructive and selfish impulses, and contribute to the development of society. Without values education loses its sacred worth and becomes merely a soulless money-earning task without being useful to the individual and to the society at large.

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THE SERPENT QUEEN -MANASA

By Anjan K. Nath

I.K. Sharma

India at present has scholars of three types: one, those who are more conversant with the western culture and its classics and have only scraps of information about ancient India's rich and varied culture; two, who have a firm grounding in India's ancient culture and classics and are quite indifferent to the great strides science has taken during the past few centuries; and three, those who have trained themselves in new branches of knowledge with new tools of learning from all possible sources without losing their moorings. Happily, the author of the book, Dr. Nath, a student of science, medicine, literature and philosophy falls under type three. He is admirably placed to handle this mystery-ridden subject because he is close to places – *Ang, Bung, Kalinga* and other eastern states – and to people – *Khasis, Mishmis*, and other hill tribes – who are snake-worshippers.

His book embodies the interesting tale of the Serpent-Queen, Manasa, whose temples are found in many parts of India. No less interesting is the genesis of the book which, according to Nath, had its 'germinal beginnings' while he went through the cave scene in *A Passage To India*. Surprisingly, V.S. Naipaul, in a recent interview, calls this book 'all lies and utter rubbish' and adds that

'Forster didn't understand what the historical status of those religions was'. Opposed to this view, Forster's book strikes a kindered note in Nath's heart and in admiration, he calls Forster a writer blessed with 'poetic vision' though he might not have studied and understood Vedic texts. In the body of the cave scene he spotted three significant words related to his theme: '*the sound*', '*flash*', and '*thrill*'.

These three words inspired the book. They are associated, in the view of the author, with the Manasa-cult, with the story of Manasa, the Universal Creative Energy which has been profusely eulogized in the Rig Veda, Atharv Ved, and Brahmanas. They have called it Nag-Sakti, the snake-energy. A nag (na+aag) does not let a person move forward once it coils itself round him. Similarly, the invisible Nag-sakti runs round all the items of creation in the world, holds them all together and does not let them fall apart. It suffuses every object of the universe from the highest point in the sky to the lowest end of the earth. Below the earth it is Vasuki, in the sky it is Skumbh (an ethereal wave column). In the human body in its coiled form it is Kundalini. According to the site it occupies it assumes its names. In short, what modern science calls

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Binding Force, the Vedic seers call nag-sakti, snake-energy.

This primordial energy exists in every atom and it flies out in all directions from the nucleus (Akshar) when an atom bursts. Nuclear scientists have called them proton, neutron, and electron. The seer-scientists of the Vedic period have named them *Brahma* (one who becomes brhad, i.e. goes on expanding endlessly), *Vishnu* (from Vidyut), and *Rudra/Shiva*. (conceived as the primordial principle of *sound* energy out of whose essence was born the *flash* of lightning (p.38). Not satisfied with naming only they presented a concrete model before the layman in the form of Shiv-linga- 'a round stone pillar piercing a circular block of stone and protruding both ways'. Immense amount of misunderstanding exists about this model as a few western scholars have interpreted it as 'an emblem of phallic worship of aboriginal origin'. Supporters of this view are not wanting in India. The noted social scientist S.C. Dube in his book *Indian Society* (1996) holds: 'The Rig-Veda had ridiculed phallus-worshippers and even prohibited their entry into Indo-Aryan sanctuaries (p.17)'. The question arises: what will a person past-seventy attain by worshipping a phallus in a forest, in isolation? If this was all, will the Sivayogis of the status of Sarvajna (Karnataka) and Nath Yogis have any mass following in this country? The whole approach is the brainwave of a pervert.

The people who deified snake-energy were known as the sarpas or nagas and their tenets as Sarpa/Ved. On the same lines developed Pishacha Ved (for Southern country), Asur Ved (for Western country), Itihasa Ved (for Northern country), Purana Ved (for Dhruva and Upper country) etc. The Manasa-cult is thus 'one of the ancient vedic cults which is based on exposition of theories of nuclear science and seeks to resolve the mysteries and riddles of creation'. In due course, diverse branches of Indian philosophy (Yoga, Mantra, Tantra), according to the author, and Indian literature developed around this cult. Yogis (Nath Yogis) carried the same idea further (through Gorakh Vani) in the medieval period. Scores of Bengali lyrics written in praise of goddess Manasa are prevalent today.

The Riddle of Creation

In Nath's view several hymns in the Rig-Ved and the Atharv-Ved "have dealt with the riddle of creation of the universe in a truly scientific manner, corresponding closely, if not exactly, with what is now being discovered by modern science. The difference lies in that the technical terms used by the vedic seers were with reference to familiar objects. These scientific theories were gradually transformed into spiritual conceptions and in later times into gods and goddess in the image of human beings, the result being that their scientific values have been over shadowed and to most,

either lost or non-existent (p. XIII)".

"The eternal silence of infinite spaces", said Pascal, "terrifies me." So it did to many. But the Vedic seers, on the other hand, pursued this question vigorously in their own intuitive meditative way till they arrived at some satisfactory answer. In the pre-creation stage, they hold, the creative energy is tranquil, non-expansive and they named it *Vindu* i.e. a point. The inherent attribute in this *Vindu* is *Manas*, 'a tendency to throw out what is congealed'. Due to fervent heat of its own from the *manas* emits *kama*/desire which evolves as vibration. The vibration (*sasarpari*, serpent - like gliding) starts as a pyramidal cone - like upsurge which is forced up by the heat of the internal energy and the forces of the *Manas* and *Kama*. Then there is an eruption through the apex of this cone. Along with the bursting forth evolve *sound* (*Vak* or speech) a *flash* of light and rays of energy in millions and billions which roll round in waves along regulated courses, giving rise to ingredients for the creation of diversified materials in the physical creation.

Surprisingly, on the other hand, a few respectable persons who followed the Bible in the West went so far as to declare the precise date and time of the birth of man. According to Dr. Lightfoot, the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, 'the creation of man took place at 9 a.m. on October 23' 'in 4000 B.C. fixed by Archbishop

Usher.' The day of the week was Friday since God rested on Saturday. (*Religion and Science* by Bertrand Russel p.51-52). This kind of pronouncement will leave school children of the twenty-first century gasping.

Allied to the riddle of creation is another riddle that rattles the human mind: Can a person attain godhood or reach godhead? The answer that flows from various cults that flourished in India is 'yes' provided the seeker has the will to undergo the hard training it requires. The sages of the Vedic and pre-vedic era devised various means to sustain themselves at a height by practising processes that came to them from their progenitors. Beyond biology they knew the psychology of a practical kind with whose aid they could direct and re-direct the creative energy of the body in any direction of their choice. Hence developed many cults and several schools of philosophical ideas. The major cults are: the Muni cult, the Rishi cult, the Vratya cult, the Mahayogin cult, the Natha cult, the Puranic cult etc. Dr. Nath, in chapter nine that runs into about seventy-five pages, has given a broad outline of the cults and various schools that flourished in India over the centuries. What should interest a modern reader is that the seer-scientists of the earlier era would not accept a statement at its face value. It must be examined closely and be put on trial. Thus the tradition of critical appraisal in the realm of thinking continued for a long time without harming the individual talent. If an Atharva

concentrates on 'the fire in the body by churning the brain', an Angiras will come up with a special method 'to force up the heart vibration to the brain'. (Nath 'has had a personal experience and knowledge of it (p.155).')

Interestingly there were revolutionaries who discarded all that had been going on in the name of the vedas. Such were Dirghatma, Vamdev, Yajnavalkya who spoke defiantly against the ritualists. For his revolt, Dirghatma had to suffer a lot as pioneers in every field did. When Darwin declared that man evolved from monkey, his adversaries cuttingly remarked because Darwin's face looked like that of a monkey. Even Carlyle called him an 'apostle of dirt-worship'. Worse than this fate awaited Dirghatma who declared that 'the main and original Source of the creative energy is congealed in deep darkness in the core (Vama)'. From the rival camp rose the mischievous voice that the poor sage was born blind and was himself steeped in deep darkness (Dirghatma). To cure the malady for all times, the old sage, bound hand and foot, was flung into a river. Though rescued by the king, the episode tells what indignities one has to suffer for being a rebel!

Apart, the study of Manasa, clearly defines scores of words like Indra, Sahaj, Devasur, Madhu, Kaitabh, Jagat, etc. which are often bandied in conversation. For instance, *Indra* is conceived as a male god

who was the chief of all the forces that keep up the machinery of the universe. He was like the fuel (indha) which keeps alive the fire of the forces. He was called Indra - Indho ha vai tam Indra Ityachaksata (p.23).'

In short, this book binds a reader with its nag-sakti that flows without break, from the start to the finish. It illuminates those dark areas which a modern man of science leaves out. Science, according to Aldous Huxley, "concentrated its attention upon such aspects of the world as it could deal with by means of arithmetic, geometry, and the various branches of higher mathematics." Nath asserts that what vedic seers had intuitively comprehended with their uncluttered brains and unimpaired contemplation touching almost the 'summits of calm' was/is in every way a larger picture of Reality.

To justify his points of view Nath draws copious references from diverse sources—Vedas, Upanishads, Aranyakas, Brahmanas, the Mahabharat, the Bhagwat Gita, the Bible, popular stories, western authors and a host of other books. The most notable part of the book is the way he has interpreted the stories commonly told in religious gatherings (e.g. Krishna and Radha, Satyvan and Savitri, Pururava and Urvashi, Aniruddha and Usha, Laxmindhara and Behula), unfolded their hidden meaning and linked them all to the central theme of the book. Here we cannot but be under the spell of Nath's erudition. In

his view, our less educated brethren, the primitives, have preserved the core idea of our ancestor's thinking in the form of rituals and myths. Books of this kind built on the strength of evidence drive us back to modify our opinion about the people whom we have come to think of as of no consequence. In fact, they deserve our gratitude. Then forests and deserts will not be mere hunting grounds for the mighty but be a rich mine of secrets that lie untouched beneath the surface of the earth.

2005 is the year of physics. And Kishore

Gandhi, the UNESCO Project Director on "Education for Twenty-First Century" writing on Sri Aurobindo observed: "These mystical insights are being significantly recognized by the physicists as more accurate expressions of the real structures of the universe than many of the classical theories of science. The dance of Shiva is providing the new paradigm to physicists for explaining the creation of this world in terms of unified field." Nath's book, I am sure, is a good pointer in that direction. Whenever the cow goes barren, they (scientists) can turn to the Bull and draw milk in profusion three times a day.

*

THE MANSION

Rita Nath Keshari

Our dreams can play around
With us.
After repeated dreams of
A huge mansion beckoning me,
I went to see a psychiatrist.
After long sessions and longer bills
The shrink eyed me suspiciously,
"A literature teacher like you
Can't quite hope to buy a flat
Leave alone a grand mansion."
He stopped, narrowed his eyes, and said,
"Were you ever assaulted, sexually or
otherwise
In a mansion, in your childhood or later on?"

The next day, I told my departmental head,
"madam, I have taught Mansfield Park
And the irony of Jane Austen
For over six years now.
I am tired of the mansion
Named as Mansfield Park in this novel.
May be Keats will be a nice change.
She obliged and my long nights
Are suddenly free from
The long shadow of
The unmentionable mansion.

*

BUILDING A CULTURE

D. V. Sahani

Let us build a culture
Where felling of trees is not there
Air and water not polluted
Zoos and bonsaing banned
Waging of wars stopped
Adulteration, bribery and corruption gone
Dowry and maiden burning bidden goodbye
Lust, greed and egoism wither away
Hatred anger and jealousy left for good
Peace and brotherhood come to stay
Boundaries of nations removed
World becomes a family

All should have understanding heart
Equal vision and serene mind
Faith, devotion and wisdom
Divine virtues vest in every heart.
Let us promote a culture
Where people are fearless
Practice truth and non-injury
Serve one and all
Without discrimination of caste and creed.
Let us remember Thee
Let us sing Thy glories
And be one with Thee.

*

For Rabindranath Tagore

P. V. Laxmi Prasad

Dadaji! "you are the Kalidasa of our age
the Exponent of Indian Fine Arts,
the Nobel Laureate of British India,
& the Composer of Indian National
Anthem."

Yet, a 100-crore India remained,
As meek as a Lamb,
Made Not much Fuss,
To the Adroit theft of "National
Property",
_____ your Nobel Credentials.
A country of "Wounded Democracy",
To Reward you with "Replica
Unbecoming",

A Paralysed State to uncover
mystery.
A transformed India of 21st Century,
Broken up into fragmented Walls,
Erecting a New order of "Stigma",
Where the mind plunges deep
Into narrow domestic concerns.
Visualised India! Transformed it is
now!
India Lost in values cherished,
At Stake, Is your Vision!
At Will, Is a Nail in our Coffin!

*

TRICKLES OF WISDOM

(English version of verses from 'Sumati Satakam')

K. V. Ramachandran

Do not live in a place
where there's no trace
Of a lender, a doctor or a Brahman
And, water sure, OH! Good man.

Better take to bulls and yoke,
And plough to living eke,
Than serve and croak
For an unpaying bloke.

A son-in-law's good nature,
A shepherd's literature,
A woman's gross veracity,
Are perhaps scarcities?

A mouth which can't express,
A mouth which can't address:
"O Mother" and "O Father"
Is like the hole of a potter.

Insatiable hunger of a man,
Inseparable linger of a fan
With pregnant pros are miry
Like the product of sheep's dairy.

Brass cannot be gold by burning,
Bad cannot be good by shining.

To help a helpful,
Is mere casual,
But, to help an unhelpful
Is an act soulful.

When you acquire wealth,
Relatives enquire health
And come near you
Richness keeping in view.
When the pond is full,
The frogs plenty call.

*

CALIFORNIA

Adolf P. Shvedchikov

We are driving day after day
Along the ocean, among dry hills
Changing cities, crossing freeways,
Turning tirelessly our wheels.
We forgot about the tourist guide—
Golden Gate Bridge, Disneyland.
I discover a primordial, wild,
Unpredictable desert land.

Oh, my dream, realized *El Dorado*,
Everything in your life you require.
But there are earthquakes, floods, tornados,
Even a dangerous brush fire...
San Diego, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria,
Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Cruz..
How different you are, *California*,
You can be violent or you can soothe.

*

TRIVENI

JULY - SEPT, 2005

LOVE AND DEATH IN LEO TOLSTOY'S "WAR AND PEACE"

B. S. Murthy

The tragic tale of Prince Andrei and Natasha Rostov that is the centerpiece of Tolstoy's masterpiece is a brilliant depiction of the fallibility of life, sublimity of love and serenity in death. Andrei was a middle-aged widower and Natasha was still in her teens when love happened to them. While Natasha's parents welcomed their romance, Andrei's father was scornful about the match of that 'chit of a girl' from the family of no fortune or rank of consequence. However, he gives in subject to the condition that Andrei should put it off for a year and stay abroad during that period. "And then if your love or passion or obduracy - whatever you choose - is still as great, marry!" says the old man.

After their secret engagement with the consent of the Rostovs, Natasha's parents, Andrei tells his betrothed, "Hard as this year will be for me, it will give you time to be sure of your own heart. I ask you to make me happy at the end of a year, but you are free: and should you discover that you do not love me, or if you should come to love."

"Why do you say that?" Natasha interrupted him. "You know that from the very day you first came to Otradne I have loved you," she cried, quite convinced that she was speaking the truth.

Thereafter, as Andrei went abroad, "flushed and agitated she (Natasha) wandered about the home that whole day. Though she did not weep; but for several days sat in her room, not crying but taking no interest in anything and only saying from time to time: "Oh, why did he go?" But a fortnight after his departure, to the surprise of those around her, she just as suddenly recovered from her mental sickness and became her old self again, only with a change in her normal physiognomy, as a child's face changes after a long illness".

At last, as Andrei's enforced exile was about to end, Natasha, as fate had willed it, gets swayed by the seductive charms of Anatole Kuragin, a wayward youth she happens to come across. "Oh why may I not love them both at once?" she kept asking herself in the depths of bewilderment. "Only so could I be perfectly happy, but now I have to choose, and I can't be happy if I let either of them go. One thing is certain, she thought, "to tell Prince Andrei what has happened, or to hide it from him, is equally impossible. But with the *other* nothing is spoilt. But must I really part for ever from the happiness of Prince Andrei's love, which I have been living in for so long."

Thus, on an impulse, she tries to elope

with Anatole though unsuccessfully. However, the shock of it all had chastening effect on her. In time, when Andrei returns to claim her hand, he was greeted by the scandalous news. Bitter and broken, he desists from meeting her and instead joins the Russian army to fight the Napoleonic aggression. However, he was critically wounded and was brought to Moscow just as the gentry were fleeing the city to the hinterland to escape the enemy.

Destiny, however, gives him a berth in one of the carts of the entourage of Count Rostov, Natasha's father.

At length, when Natasha comes to know about his presence in their camp, she tentatively steps into the tent where the wounded Andrei is laid thinking—"Yes—love (he reflected again, quite lucidly). But not that love which loves for something, to gain something or because of something, but the love I know for the first time when, dying, I saw my enemy and yet loved him. I experienced the love which is the very essence of the soul, the love which requires no object. And I feel that blessed feeling now too. To love one's neighbours, to love one's enemies, to love everything—to love God in all His manifestations. Human love serves to love those dear to us but to love one's enemies we need divine love. And that is why I knew such joy when I felt I loved that man. What became of him? Is he alive? ... Human love may turn to

hatred but divine love cannot change. Nothing, not even death can destroy it. It is the very nature of the soul. Yet how many people I hated in my life? And of them all none did I love and hate as much as her."

And he vividly pictured Natasha to himself, not as he had pictured her in the past with her charms only which gave him such delight, but for the first time imagining her soul. And he understood her feelings, her suffering, her shame and remorse. Now for the first time, he realized all the cruelty of his rejection of her, the cruelty of breaking with her. "If only I might see her once more. Just to look into those eyes and say..." In time, finding her near him "he fetched a sigh of relief, smiled and held out his hand". And she sought his forgiveness for what she "did to him in a scarcely audible, broken whisper". In response he said, raising her face with his hand so as to look into her eyes, "I love you more, more than before."

While Natasha tended Andrei with love and care till his inevitable death, Pierre Bezuhov upon learning about his friend's demise mused, "Can he have died in the bitter mood he was in then? Is it possible that the meaning of life was not revealed to him before he died?" At length, Pierre, who had a heart of gold as Andrei felt, finds the answers when he hears about his mate's last days from Natasha.

"Yes, Yes and so.....?" Pierre kept saying as he lent towards her with his whole body, listening earnestly. "Yes; so he found peace? He grew gentler"? With his whole soul he was always striving for one thing only - to be completely good - so he could not have been afraid of death. The faults he had - if he had any - were not of his making. So he did soften?... What a happy thing that he saw you again," he added, suddenly turning to Natasha and looking at her with eyes full of tears.

Natasha's face twitched. She frowned

and for an instant looked down. For a moment she hesitated; should she speak or not?

"Yes, that was a great happiness," she said in her quiet voice with its deep chest notes. "For me it was happiness indeed." She paused "And he ... he ... he said he was wishing for just that at the very moment I entered the room...."

(* From Rosemary Edmonds' translation for Penguin Classics.)

*

SWEAT AND SALIVA

'Nisapati'

They play this game for days together
In hot or cold or cloudy weather
One man throws by spin or pace
The opponent guards his caged face.

He beats the ball with all his might
Four or six; or drive it straight
Into the fielder's open fist
Bouquets or brickbats who knows first?

And then you have an umpire who
Declares it as lbw;
His word is law, your appeal
Is sore throat if he does not feel...

The batsman sheds a lot of sweat
And has a dehydration threat
The bowler has it double as that
As he loses Saliva and Sweat.

*

CURSE OF THE BAMIYAN BUDDHA

V. Rama Rao

Once Lord Buddha
Asked an irate, irritant parent
Of his disciple, who was cursing him
What happens to food
When you prepare a feast
And the guest doesn't turn up?
The parent replied
He would wind up
And eat it for himself.
Then Buddha replied
"You just prepared a feast
For me, and I don' eat it."

Time like these try men's souls,
How trying it is to live in these times!
These are trying times for men's souls,
Soulwise, these are trying times.

*

*

HAMLET

K. V. Ramana Rao

"The observed of all observers", a princely mind,
Mishandled by life, a gentle soul, confined
To the earth's cramping limits, oppressing and hard,
"A divinity shapes" this child of the Stratford bard.

He missed love's balm, there is nothing to compensate,
Annoyed, rough-hewed, by a weird exacting fate,
"Cracks a noble heart", cries Horatio distressed,
"And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest".

*

PATTERNS

Tommy Frank O'Connor

Until we meet again
another day awaits
in that steel and concrete world
growling a city hell.

I join the quest for mammon
where I meet again
searchers, packed in wheeled boxes.
Twitch, unfeeling, unseeing,
seeking the patch
where each can find a niche
of control.

A throng of loneliness
claws its way to work places,
and afterwards trails back
to several tired refuges
called home
patterned by strings of time.

Again I leave you
until we meet again.

*

IN AN ANTIQUE SHOP AT MIDDAY

Noel King

She jumps from her browse:
seven years old eyes peal the air.
Swinging behind herself
she spots the bank of clocks;
which one is cuckooing?
She scans frantically,
rabbits her head for my help.

I turn the tears in my eye away,
think of what choice she might make
in time.

*

BOOK REVIEWS

ENGLISH

SUNDARA KANDA: HANUMAN'S ODYSSEY Translated by B.S. Murthy (Self Imprint, F-9, Nandini Mansion, 1-10-234, Ashok Nagar, Hyderabad 500020 2005. 290 pages. Rs.150)

There are two classics in Sanskrit that get repeatedly translated and commented upon. But none of us exclaims: "Oh, yet another translation!" Such is the fascinating appeal of Sundara Kanda and the Bhagavad Gita. B.S. Murthy, novelist and translator of the Gita has now come up with Sundara Kanda in this excellently produced paperback that has a Madhubani painting of "Anguliya Pradhaana" on the cover. Why Sundara Kanda?

"If Mahabharata's Bhagavad-Gita is taken as a philosophical guide, Ramayana's Sundara Kanda is sought for spiritual solace. What is more, many believe that reading Sundara Kanda or hearing it recited would remove all hurdles and bring in good tidings! Well miracles apart, it's in the nature of Sundara Kanda to inculcate fortitude and generate hope in one and all. After all, isn't it a depiction of how Hanuman goes about his errand against all odds! Again, won't it portray how Seetha, on the verge of self-immolation, overcomes despair to see life in a new light?

Besides, how Hānuman's Odyssey paves the way for Rama to rescue his kidnapped wife!"

The translator has attempted a sloka-by-sloka re-creation of the original. Well known as the bija-kanda of Valmiki's epic, this is the Book in which the past is narrated by Hanuman to Sita and the future is described by Trijatha to her. Thus, reading this Kanda is considered to be as efficacious as reading the entire epic. The Kanda begins at the take-off stage of Hanuman's journey to Lanka. B. S. Murthy places easy readability as the prime criterion and hence there would be no point in classicists raising their brows at the very first couplet:

"Egged on by peers Vayu's son
Enshrined by man as Hanuman
Enthused himself to shoulder
Search of Seetha Rama's spouse
Snared whom Ravan to Lanka
Sea across that hundred leagues."

There is of course a plethora of inversions as if the translator would set the clock back by a century. The philosophy of translation has undergone a radical change in the ensuing decades. Even a scripture like the Bible has to bow to the winds of change!

All the same, the story-line keeps us engaged though I do feel the absence of some of the finest and most poignant images such as Seetha's state on seeing the signet-ring as one drinking from a cup that has a mix of nectar and poison (amritam vishasamsrushtam). The titles tickle the enquiring mind as appropriate signposts: womanizer at work, carrot and stick, itching for fight, odyssey in a nutshell...

Andhra Pradesh is Rama-country and coming from Hyderabad, B.S. Murthy's version is most welcome.

Dr. Prema Nandakumar

'CRITICAL ESSAYS ON INDIAN ENGLISH WRITING'—D. Ramakrishna, Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 12 essays over 141 pages in hardback: Price Rs. 350.

Scholarly in content and meticulous in treatment, all the twelve essays under an attractive book jacket make a marvelous reading. But for one, that the rest were all published earlier in standard literary journals, bears testimony to the quality of these collected writings. The new essay on V.S. Naipaul's Indian odyssey from darkness to light is as illuminating as the rest of them.

The works and times of A.K. Ramanujan, Nissim Ezekiel, P. Lal, Mulk Raj Anand, Shiv K. Kumar, Rabindranath Tagore besides V.S. Naipaul are dealt in depth in dedicated essays.

Of course, the author's long acquaintance with Ezekiel and Anand add as he deals with their life and times. Besides, the Indian literary scene in general is surveyed in Contemporary Indian English Literary Scene, Multiculturalism and Indian (English) Literature and Indian English Prose Writing. The beauty of the book is that all these essays written over the years make a composite whole and from the way they are structured one gets the full picture of the Indian English Writing as it evolved through the writings in fictional and non-fictional prose and poetry. Well up to a point that is, till the advent of the 'classic authors' as the writer calls the founding fathers of Indian English Writing. Of course, the essay on V.S. Naipaul is but an exception. After going through the book, one might wish that the author, in time, would come out with a sequel to this work to cover the current crop of Indian English Writers with the same objectivity with which he dealt the works of the old timers.

B. S. Murthy

THE WALKING SHIVA OF VARANASI (Life, Legends and Teachings of Trilingaswami) by Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao. Published by Richa Prakashan D-36, South Extension Part-one, New Delhi -110049 (India). Price: 9NR. 150.00 USD.4.00

The book "The Walking Shiva of Varanasi" by Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao is a treat for those who are after the gold of spiritual

consciousness and can savour the comforting wonders of divine attainments as they get manifested on this earth through the lives of saints and sages to be seen or experienced by a few blessed men and women of this world. The book will be of great value and interest.

The author gives an elaborate account of the great swami's life right from his parentage—birth, childhood, youth, his work, the healing miracles and then the great departure. The swami's ever seeking of seclusion and the devotees ever thronging to him makes for interesting reading.

The author gives detailed account of the swami's wanderings and the many miracles he performed even the bringing back of life to the dead. Trailingaswami's yogic powers were tremendous and well known all over India.

It is recorded that the swami was born in 1607. He left his mortal body in the year 1887. He knew the time and declared it. To quote from the book, "There was quite a flutter in the entire city of Kashi when the news spread that Trailingaswami would leave the earthly body. He became the talk of the town.....the swami's great departure was just ten days away. By then all those who had been very close to the swami were there, Sadananda swami, Kalicharan swami, Brahmananda swami, Bholanath swami were all there besides two other paramahansas.

Mangal das Thakur was with him as always. The swami explained to all those assembled there various spiritual matters till the day before the final moment came." Then the author goes on to narrate in detail the unique way the great Trailingaswami bade adieu to the world.

Amongst the foremost disciples of the Swami, Umacharan Mukhopadhyaya seems to occupy a prominent place. He was blessed to be in the Guru's company for most of the time and receive all the training and diksha. Kalicharan seems to be another close disciple of the swami. Mangal-das was swami's constant attendant.

Two renowned saints who happened to be contemporaries and friends of Trailingaswami were Sri Ramakrishna Paramahmsa and Sri Shyamacharana Lahiri, the great Guru whose life and work are described in the world famous book, "Autobiography of a Yogi", by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda. Some of the great yogis and saints who met the swami and revered him were Bhairavi Mata, Mata Rajyalakshmi Devi, Brahmacharini Shankeri Maa and Fakir Abdul Gafoor.

The chapters VII to XVIII of the book are devoted to Trailingaswami's teachings the subjects being "Guru sishya upasana, Purvajanma – Parajanma (Previous life - After life.), Self-Realisation and so on. Then the author gives an account of "The breaking

of Shat Chakras". This chapter contains a detailed account of the chakras.

A note on the history of Telugu and Trilinga Desa, pages showing the Shat Chakras and then a list of helpful books in Telugu, Hindi, English and Bengali are informative additions in the book. The cover photograph and design are well chosen as befitting the subject of the book. There are valuable quotations from Pothana, AdiShankara and Emerson. The book is a boon to spiritual seekers and will in all probability be widely read and enjoyed by many.

A. Satyavathi

CROSSING THE MIRAGE: B. S. Murthy, Hyderabad: Self Imprint, 2003, pp.iv+244, Rs.150/-

Here is a work of fiction in English, presenting a cluster of erotic exploits of both men and women. It is an interconnected web of love tales of the protagonist Chandra, his wife Nitya, her ravisher Vasu, and of Satya, the constant lover of Vasu's wife Prema. The narrative moves from Hyderabad to Bombay to Hyderabad to Calcutta to Kakinada and back to Hyderabad.

One could say that it is a well-constructed novel, rounded, and doling out poetic justice in large quantities. The two characters the author fails to accommodate in the well-knit

circle are Ashok and Rashid, who help the protagonist in the early stages to break out of his shell and become what he is.

The style is pedantic and academic, making the reader run to a dictionary for help a number of times. The writer has a sly tone, a tongue-in-the cheek - occasionally even a cynical-attitude to his subject. And he has a penchant for quibbles and punning ['inescapable escape' (17), 'I could've met my man at work to work out the rest' (36), 'to impart class to attract the classes' (38), 'what a miss, why surely she's a Miss' (72), 'apologize to her telling the telling affects of poetic justice on my life' (223), etc.] But he has either a poor grip over or a disregard for idiomatic English ['If only she were after you' for 'took after you' 'his children haven't gone after his wife' for 'haven't taken after his wife'; we find misuse of phrases ['what with' (89,90) and 'bottom line' (194), 'she wetted her eyes for words' (141), 'at the steering' for 'at the wheel' (187), 'what wondered him was' (56), 'deep breathed' (21), 'we'll register marry' (101), 'you've wide open my eyes' (192) 'kind edged cruelty' (152)]; the frequent omission of comma, and the very frequent non-inversion of the predicate in the Interrogative ['where it all went wrong?'] jolts the reader. The author gives his own language to his characters: they all speak in the same style; there is no attempt to individualize them through their speech.

The book is about love, calf-love, love of a courtesan, illicit love, adolescent love, physical love, love-making, and pretty little else besides. The writer does not use a single four-lettered word; yet it is as erotic as any writing bordering on pornography. There are two instances (124, 233) where the language is decorated with deliberate sexual images. The writer even tries to propound a philosophy of love, linking it at some point with *the Bhagavadgita*!

Using a kind of interior monologue for most of the narrative, the writer attempts to analyse and project the inferiority complex of the protagonist, resulting from his inherited 'unhandsomeness'; and this is the 'mirage' he has to cross, with the help of his wife. Crass materialism of Vasu, gullibility of Nitya, primness of Prema and the prejudice of Satya, are the personal mirages these characters are called upon to cross. They all, all except Vasu succeed at the end, and the pairs live happily ever after!

There are many books of this kind we come across in the West, most of them blatantly pornographic. There are books like *Nana*, *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, and *Lolita*, which are considered classics. This book is not honestly pornographic, and is certainly unlikely to be a classic. Possibly a few adults may find their own adolescent dreams or experiences reflected here. But the book would very likely help to titillate the young

adolescent reader and college goer (if he/she can be made to read books at all, that is.)

S. K. Sarma

VALLABHAJOSYULA SUBBARAO
COLLECTED WRITINGS - Edited by S. Krishna Sarma. (pages: 168, price: Rs. 120). Maruth Book Depot, Kothapet, Guntur- 522 001.

In the eyes of Vallabhajosyula's sketch on the cover, one could discern peculiar pathos and in the photograph inside a strange determination. As you read on, you would discover these traits in his writings.

For the non-starters, Vallabhajosyula Subbarao (1904-1963) strolled on the Andhra academic stage like a colossus for two decades as the Principal of Hindu College, Guntur. As Prema Nandakumar laments in the blurb, the gain to academics was a loss to literature - "If only he had a longer life-span and the needed leisure, he would have definitely blossomed as an Alexander Pope of our times, for humour and satire are singularly absent in Indian writing in English". One need not be lover of poetry to be absorbed by Subbarao's verse for it is characterized by its strength of content and the vigour of expression. Can one picture Subbarao's poetry better than K R Srinivasa Iyengar, who carried the last word on the Indian writing in English - "The mastery of language is impressive, the versification is

sprightly, and the rhymes invariably produce the desired comic or devastating effect”.

Having roused their appetite, perhaps, it won't be fair to the readers of this review if I were to fail to let them savour a sample of Subbarao's verse in "To my American Air Hostess of the A.I.I." -

“...Enquiring of each of us what we
want,

In a voice that is Musical chant,
Sustaining our spirits hour after hour--
A butterfly flitting from flower to flower.
Not gathering but dispensing honey,
And shedding joy for love not
money?.....”

However, if one lays store on the 'mind of science' and not 'the poetry of the heart' still the collection has plenty to offer. Displaying the versatility of Subbarao as a thinker and writer, the collection contains, besides poetry, long and short, his lectures, radio talks etc. His 1959 radio talk is a revelation and would be valid for all times to come. Consider this: "We must realize that truth has no value except as it contributes to the richness of man's personality and solution of his problems. The discovery that the height of Mount Everest is 29,002ft. and not, as previously supposed, 29,000ft. may be, for aught we know, an advance in the direction of truth; but the life of man is very little affected by this knowledge. It is not just any truth that is important but the truth we need as human beings."

However, for those who delight in light reading, there are playlets too. Mr. S. Krishna Sarma is to be complimented for bringing out this edition that would help the present generation, and hopefully the future generations as well, to understand and appreciate the genius of a man of letters of the generation gone by, and get benefited thereby.

B S Murthy

RIPPLE MARS: Readings from Ravuri Baaradwaja's Elegiac Pentad, translated by Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao. Published by Ravuri Bharadwaja, 159, 2RT, Vijayanagar colony, Hyderabad, Price Rs 100/- Pages 115.

The jottings in the Elegiac Pentad "Ripple Marks" are the outpourings of poet Bharadwaja's grief occasioned by the death of his wife Kantam. The bonds of love between the poet and his wife are so strong that the grief of the poet transcends the physical and earthly planes and reaches the etherial and the sublime. Man and woman, the mundane and the spiritual, the human and the divine, all merge into one. The objects of Nature and the Universe constantly move, one into the other, in the imagination of the poet.

What the poet sees and hears, feels and responds in his world of imagination is Kantham, who lives in Eswar, Eswar who finds a place for himself in the heart of the poet! Man, woman and God are all one entity. Is not Eswar half-man and half-woman in human form?

The poet's grief, poignant as it is, consoles and soothes him and the reader. The vibrant ripples of the poet's emotion move the poet and the reader alike and transports them to the margents of thoughts, explaining and comforting both to accept the inevitable.

The jottings of the poet in prose and verse in the diary is poetry of the highest kind, philosophical, metaphysical, spiritual and at the same time earthly. The depth of feeling, the expanse of thought and the breadth of vision leave the reader astonished and breathless.

It is not an easy task for a translator to bring out the delicate and highly sensitive nuances of the thought process of the poet from Telugu into English. Dr. Rao has done a commendable and enviable job in keeping fresh the original flavour and fragrance of the thought and emotion in his translation in an easy and appealing style. In the English version the reader is in the company of the poet. This is a book which lovers of literature cherish.

D. Ranga Rao

TELUGU

RAMAYANA PAVANI; Janaki Jani, Kakinada; Sahiti Prachuranalu; Rs. 50 / US \$ 5

It is not enough that books are just

published. One has to get it printed. Even after getting it printed, it is not that easy to sell the copies. We are not accustomed to purchasing and reading any book. We expect it to be presented to us with compliments. Mr Janaki Jani is fortunate in this regard. This book has now come to third reprint. Pavani (Hanuman)'s tale in Ramayana has been very grippingly told, keeping the original Ramayana in view. One does not find an attempt on the part of Janaki Jani to exhibit his literary skills. Instead one finds, his anxiety to depict the story of Hanuma as in the Ramayana is evident right through. Any work that aims at universal good stands and is welcome.

Hanuma's story as in the Kishkhindha, Sundara and Ayodhya kandas has been so ably rendered by the author that the book makes you read with out putting it down at one stretch. Bapu's title cover is indeed a highlight.

The ancestry of Hanuma, ministership to Sugriva in Rishyamuka, acquaintance with Rama and Lakshmana, steering the friendship between Rama and Sugriva, the search of Seeta, the war with Ravana, the meeting of Rama and Seetha, Sri Rama's coronation—all these events have been narrated in easy readable style. By reading this book, one is sure to get the credit of having read the Sundarakanda. The dialogues are short and crisp and appropriate.

“Vakyajno vakya kusalah” say bards about Hanuma. One fails to understand why Janaki Jani ignores the origin of Hanuman.

Sri Rama is convinced about the way Hanuma speaks as the minister of Sugriva. The praise of Rama of Hanuma ring/true.

“Lakshmana! This minister of Sugriva knows what he is talking. One who has not read the vedas cannot speak this way. Please talk to him courteously. There is not one misplaced word in what he spoke. He is precise, unambiguous, and unhesitating. His words come from the heart. The tone is pleasing to the ear and the words are highly cultured, and appeal to the heart. What can a King without such a minister achieve? One who has such a minister achieves every thing.”

“Tamabhya bhashe.. doota vakva prachoditam”

Kami-setty Srinivasulu

TELUGU DRAMA AND SOCIAL AWARENESS by Prof. S. Gangappa. Sasi Prachranalu, C-73, Srinivaa Nagar Colony, Guntur, A. P. Price Rs. 100-00, pages 135.

The book is a major research project taken up by the learned professor with financial assistance from the U. G C. after his retirement from the Nagarjuna University, Guntur. The author deals with the theme of his choice exhaustively from the beginnings of Telugu drama (from 1860) to the present day (2000).

He deals with different phases and trends this genre passed through in its growth and development in a systematic manner, with particular reference to ‘social awareness’ presented in the plays. Literature reflects life. Life and literature are the two sides of the coin that influence each other. That being so, the author’s choice of the theme, social awareness, as dealt with in this book, is of relevance and interest to the lay reader and the research scholar alike.

The author divides the book into periods, devoting a chapter to each period and the types of drama that held sway in each phase- patriotic, rationalistic, historical, mythological etc. depicting problems like untouchability, casteism, evils of dowry system, feminism etc. to name a few, with stress on social awareness created by the playwrights to educate the society towards redressal of the problems.

The reviewer, a teacher of the author four decades ago, commends and appreciates the effort of Prof. Gangappa in producing a reference book on a highly relevant aspect of Telugu drama.

The bibliography furnished at the end is exhaustive and useful to the research student.

Proper care in the use of the language would have been of help to this research work of great import.

D. Ranga Rao

9) **JEEVANA SRAVANTHI**: Modali Arunachalam, 402 Srirama Apts, Narayanaguda, Hyderabad - 500 027; pp 239; Rs 65/--

This fascinating social novel written by Shri Modali Arunachalam, a renowned novelist, depicts with crystal clarity the lost 'collective' social culture and 'noble' traditions of the typical middle class Telugu speaking family of yesteryears. These traditions and culture, in fact, reflected true values of life such as a simple life style, love and affection for all kith and kin, compassion and sympathy with an ever-helpful attitude towards the less fortunate, an intense spirit of sacrifice, a great sense of responsibility and commitment at all spheres of activity, and most importantly contentment and true happiness derived from simple pleasures of life. This indeed was an ideal situation wherein everybody wished for and contributed to the wellbeing of all without any reservations whatever. Entirely devoid of jealousy and hatred, a big heart together with a liberal mind underlined the conduct of the family. This was the pre independence scenario of the typical middle class Telugu speaking family.

And then the country won its independence. That led to a gradual but big change in social, political, and economic awareness and aspiration levels of the average man. Together with a rapid materialistic growth

thrust on society during the past half-century, self-interest blended with greed and hypocrisy found its way slowly into the life style of this once simple and straightforward family segment, with a corresponding downfall in its perspective on life, traditions, and values.

The author presents before the reader, with picturesque detail, these gradual real life changes and developments in society, that have taken shape with changing times over the past few decades. The elderly reader is assured of plentiful pleasant reminiscences of his childhood days and events while reading this novel.

Undoubtedly Jeevana Sravanthi, a well-written family novel, is thoroughly enjoyable by readers of all categories both young and old.

Kambhampati Krishna Prasad

*

READERS MAIL

A fitting tribute (Jan-Mar, 2005 issue) to the two great personalities i.e., 1) Literary 2) Musical. It is said that literature is thought-provoking while the power of music is enthralling and instantaneous. You have rightly dedicated the issue to the man of letters late P. V. Narasimha Rao and an interesting article by Mr. D. Ranga Rao on the Queen of Indian Carnatic music late M. S. Subbulakshmi. May their souls rest in peace. May they be born again to serve the masses.

P. V. Laxmi Prasad, Peddapalli

"I heartily congratulate you over the fine printing 'Buddha, the Wandering Monk' on the cover page of Triveni. More so, your esteemed Editorship... Your glorious article 'On Science and Technology' has carried me off my feet, impressing me (a man of 85 years) beyond words. The merit of TRIVENI lies in your editorials. May your tribe increase!"

R. Narayanaswami, Tirupati

"Your article on Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao speaks well of your close association and the love and affection he bore for you."

K. Gopala Krishna Murthy, Vijayawada

"I will speak about Triveni not only to the Australian Professors but also Indians interested in reading such magazines about Indian culture and literature."

Prof. D. Ramakrishna, Hanamkonda

"It is needless to say that Triveni is an excellent Quarterly and endears itself to English

readership"

K. V. Ramachandra Rao, Bangalore

"I read the Triveni regularly and it is difficult to pick out the best among the variety of articles presented in any issue, but to say that your editorials are the leading lights of the journal is no exaggeration."

Dr. G. Lakshmipathi, Hyderabad

"I appreciate the write up on Ashoka Editcts, and I am sure your journal continues including such precious aricles in the future"

Abdul Rasheed Bijapure, Dhule

"The tribute to Sri P. V. in the current issue of Triveni is touching. Krishna, the first communist, is equally interesting, for its presentation of alternate view of Krishna as a human being, a leader, and a therapist for the maladies of the mind."

Prof. B. Parvathi, Visakhapatnam

"What is more illuminating and knowledgeable than Triple Stream? You have rightly said that science begins with doubt and ends with discovery. The essential ingredient of scientific research is journey but not destination. The article on Dr. A. S. Rao is superb. That he dismissed his son from service speaks of his honesty and integrity as a noble servant. One hardly finds administrators like Dr. A. S. Rao these days. The contributor I. Satyasree deserves to be congratulated."

P. V. Laxmi Prasad, Peddapalli

BRIDGE - IN - MAKING

Pronab Kumar Majunder, the Editor of the English Poetry Journal, **Bridge - in - Making** recently retired in Kolkata as Special Secretary to the Government of Bengal. Perhaps he is the only bureaucrat who has authored six books of poems in English and eight books in Bengali, his mother tongue. Mrs. Suchismitha Majumder is a poet and singer. His son Rajarshi is an executive.

His journal has no subscription rates which shows his dedication to literature and journalism. In spite of his diminished income he proposes to continue his journal.

TRIVENI wishes him happy and peaceful retirement and uninterrupted continuance of the journal.

-Editor

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- Managing Trustee, Triveni Foundation

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B. S. Murthy	Novelist, Writer, Hyderabad.
'Nisapati' (M. H. V. Subba Rao)	Chief Engineer (Retd.) Hyderabad.
V. Rama Rao	Poet, Secunderabad.
K. V. Ramana Rao	Scholar, Writer, Hyderabad.
Tommy Frank O'Connor	Poet, Kerry, Ireland.
Noel King	Poet, Springwood, Kerry, Ireland.

TRIPLE STREAM**KATRINA – LESSONS IN HUMANISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL CARE***I. V. Chalapati Rao*

After KATRINA crashed ashore on August 29th, 2005, five days after the unprecedented damage, death and destruction caused by the hurricane with deadly water and wind, New Orleans which was once the tourist destination, has become a ghost, emptied of its population. Despite early warning signals Government failed to take required action. Thousands of its citizens, predominantly blacks, were either dead or uprooted. Thousands of refugees poured into the neighbouring States and Cities. More than 2,20,000 people sought shelter in Texas. Evacuees have also been moved by train, bus and air to Oklahoma, Florida, Tennessee, Colorado, Arizona, Georgia and South Carolina. Indeed it was the biggest influx of refugees in U.S. history. Still 10,000 residents are expected to be holed up in the devastated city. Orders have been passed to evacuate them by force. Administrative inefficiency, unimaginable neglect, misplaced policy priorities and market driven environmental destruction stood exposed. For want of proper maintenance the dykes and levees erected to keep the sea out, collapsed for lengths of hundreds of meters. The flood rendered the city uninhabitable for at least two years. Minimal aid in the form of food and drinking water was not provided. Bodies

decomposed quickly in temperatures of 35 degrees celsius.

Three states on the gulf coast—Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama—were severely affected. Nearly 10 lakh people were rendered homeless. The ‘National Response Plan’, prepared by the Homeland Security Department running into 426 pages (explaining how the nation should deal with all kinds of national disasters) failed miserably.

What’s more horrible and scandalous is, the Superdome in which thousands of refugees were packed like sardines became a veritable hell with dirt and shame. Hooligans who had neither sentiment nor scruple raped the hapless women in the presence of people! Toilets were full and over-flowing. Dead bodies lay uncared for. One wonders whether cultured human beings could be so vile and inhuman as to indulge in arson and rape when their own fellow countrymen were grappling with a life and death situation. Perhaps looting became necessary for survival. Even then it is inexcusable.

Looting of shops and houses by armed gangs went on unchecked. Even helicopters which went to drop food were fired at and had to go back. All this took place in the world’s richest and most powerful country – U.S.! We take pride in recollecting the human

kindness and fellow feeling witnessed during similar natural calamities in India – the Killer Cyclone which devastated Diviseema (in Andhra Pradesh), the Gujarat earth quake, the tsunami and the recent floods in Mumbai. Ordinary citizens behaved decently and performed heroic deeds of ‘good Samaritanship’. Even criminal gangs did not exploit the situation. This is the true Indian culture.

Hurricane Katrina has dispelled several myths about the U. S. The disaster was as much the result of racism and *laissez-faire* economics as of enraged nature itself. The American way of life appears to be designed to protect the haves and to leave the have-nots to fend for themselves. The predominantly black city of New Orleans has 40% illiteracy rate. We also have seen the super power plead for aid from Europe, Canada, the U.N. and the lesser-developed countries. The country which has been boasting about aiding other countries has miserably failed in providing succour and timely relief to its own people in times of need. People could not get away for lack of the price of a taxi out of town. The delayed response is unforgivable because they spent 250,000 dollars last year for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to conduct an 8-day hurricane exercise for a mock killer storm hitting New Orleans. In spite of all this preparation the administration could not provide not only food and water but also minimum security. It is interesting to note that the U. S. army took 48 hours to reach New Orleans whereas the Indian army and navy

could reach Mumbai in 12 hours to do relief work. After 48 hours New Orleans was still waiting for relief whereas Mumbai was back on its feet and business was as usual after 48 hours. It was too late when the shoot-to-kill orders were passed to check looting. It has been noted by the world that the world’s militarily strongest country is no better than any underdeveloped country in disaster management. It was a severe blow to America’s self-image.

There is a new angle to the response to the calamity. Some of the survivors of the disaster are said to be attributing racial discrimination to the delayed response to the crisis. It is unfortunate if it is true in the land of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson. An article in ‘The Hindu’ dated September 7, 2005, reports: “The President took two days to curtail his holiday to fly over the city in trouble and when he made the visit on ground, he did not go to the worst hit areas. The Vice-President was ‘still’ on a holiday in Wyoming and the Secretary of State was publicly seen shopping for shoes. Meanwhile worldwide television was showing dead bodies of victims in wheel chairs abandoned in sports stadium and convention centers.....” (Dr. Sivarama Krishnan, The Hindu dt.7.9.2005).

Critics say that relief work was crippled by the fact that 10,000 of the Louisiana State Guards were in Iraq for the so-called war against terror, and Texas has no public services worth the name. Tax breaks for the well to do have resulted in cuts in public services for the poor. The rich will not accept

shared nationhood with the rest. It is deplorable that an overwhelming majority of the victims of hurricane Katrina are poor and black. "For centuries they have had next to no voice in the politics of the U.S. African Americans are hugely underrepresented on the States electoral rolls."

Our sympathies are offered to the affected people. We know what it is to suffer as victims of national calamities. Katrina was followed by another hurricane called RITA which caused floods and considerable damage in Texas. RITA is followed by WILMA!

It is humankind's sheer arrogance

bordering on stupidity to presume conquest of nature and domination over environment. Urban civilisations arise on coastlines in the shadow of tsunamis and on the margins of fire-spitting volcanoes and seismic regions. Cities grow and prosper until nature shakes its deadly mane and asserts its supremacy. Then as nemeses, bridges are washed out, highways are converted into rivers, power and communication lines become inoperative buildings collapse and lakhs of people are rendered homeless. Man's helplessness is exposed. OZ is only a myth and the wizard is a puny creature! *

OBITUARY

We regret to announce the sudden demise of Dr. Vidya Nivas Misra, Chief Editor of Nava Bharat Times, New Delhi. He died in a car crash in Varnasi. He was one of our valued members of the Advisory Council.

May his soul rest in peace. We offer our condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

- Chief Editor, TRIVENI

DIVINE GUEST

G Sankara Bhanu

Any day my Divine Guest may call on me
I shall be ready with arms open,
Ridding myself of all bondages
With my mind focused on Him.

Any day my Divine Guest may call on me
I shall be ready free from memories
Of all joys and sorrows of a life time
With my mind repeating His Name.

Any day my Divine Guest may call on me
I shall be ready with inner quietism
Expenencing plenitude of His Grace
With my mind eulogizing His Deeds.

That day when my Divine Guest calls on me
May I enjoy His Grace
With my mind and soul immersed in Him
And the light glowing in me merging into that
Divine Light *

ADJUSTING OUR LENSES

Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao

Adjusting lenses is a figurative way to suggest cultivating the right and proper way to see, understand and respond to things. Seeing things correctly would help cultivating a right attitude leading to a good and understanding vision. Long ago it was said that the mind in itself and in its own place makes a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell. In real life, it is one's own attitude, that is the capacity to see (which means the correct lenses) that make life either as pleasurable, meaningful and worth living on the one hand or otherwise. There could be two ways of looking at life, yielding two perspectives. Broadly there are two perspectives, the tragic and the comic. The comic (not merely the laughable) is said to be more pleasing, and, in the long run, life-sustaining. The tragic perspective contributes to creating a salutary effect by sobering down the effervescent eddies of tears caused by grief.

To borrow a figure from the theatre in our national psyche there is a stable and rooted conviction that all the world is a stage and all men actors playing their roles as directed by the creator, God is sometimes envisioned as a *sootradhari* in this *jagannataka*. A writer said that this life in the world is a comedy for those who think and a tragedy for those who feel. Coming to feeling, it is highly subjective, the thing seen through the individual lenses. The same scene may appear to some very painful

but natural and to some not very logical and hence absurd. All of us have feelings and all of us to some extent or the other are thinkers also. But then, most of the time we reveal ourselves occupied totally with the one or the other in exclusion to the other. This lands us in trouble.

What is necessary is a balance between the heart and the mind, balance between the thinking and feeling. Thought has to be perfected and feeling has to be held under control. We have the moral sense, which really does not have much to do with university degrees or bank balances. Right from our childhood the parents, school and everyone around have given us some idea of good and bad. We have been given the idea in the simplest formula: *paropakaraaya punyaya paapaaya para peedanam*. Helping others gives *punya*, merit, harming, is *paapa*, sin. We commit offence and violence, *himsa*, not out of ignorance but because of the inability to see correctly. This ability to adjust lenses comes from ripeness, maturity of the mind. A mature mind is essential for real happiness in life. Happiness is contentment.

Anybody familiar with *Gayatri* knows how our sages and seers down the ages and the pious and devout among us even today have been, and still are, worshippers of nature. Worship is respecting and treating someone

or something as noble, powerful and capable of blessing us. What is not worshipping that is around? The tree, the river, the sky, the earth, fire, the breeze, our forefathers worshipped everything in nature.

It is of urgent importance to understand how we look at things and how they ought to be looked at to get the best of our vision. Though life is like a play, life is real and it presents problems and offers pleasures also. A drama is unreal but life is real. It cannot be looked upon either as tragic or totally comic. We want to live, notwithstanding the suffering that is subsumed in it. We will do well to equip ourselves to face all contingencies with the capacity to adjust the lenses. The ordinary human being is exhilarated by joys and confused and thrown in despair by problems. To meet both what is needed is equanimity.

Only an inclusive vision explains and accounts for the 'human condition'. The human condition is compounded of both tears and laughter. Tears and laughter are part of living.

Acceptance, tolerance, cheerfulness, faith in a supreme power, resilience, forgiveness, capacity to endure all these are necessary. The advantage of cultivating an inclusive vision is that it enables us to see the contradictions and the inherent absurdity in human acts, roles and projects. This enables us to accept human acts and human mind, with all man's weaknesses and failures. Those who have belief in providence and God would not be easily disturbed or shattered. Such people can be considered *samadarasanas* for they have a rich sense of humour and a sort of

philosophical amusement at all contradictions and illogicalities. God's play or *leela* is such, they tell themselves.

Life is a strange mixture, of the tragic and the comic. It is necessary for us all to acquire a perspective that can react healthily to all situations. The implication of this for enthusiastic lovers is to cultivate serenity and equanimity, cheerfulness and compassion. Only adjusting the lenses makes the cultivation easy. Sri Krishna, the divine charioteer enjoins us to practice cultivating the saint's eye-view, *sama drishti*. The spiritually evolved have this quality.

'The learned ones, the *pandits* look upon the learned pious *brahmin*, the cow, the elephant, the dog and the one who cooks and eats dog's meat with *sama drishthi*, equal temper of mind.'

Our *dharma* is *sanatana dharma*, the *vedic dharma*. We are told time and again by *jnanis* that Hinduism is not a religion but a way of life. Let us understand why this is true. Religion cannot exist independent of our life or way of living. When it is accepted as an integral part of people's belief and way of living, it is no longer a religion in the abstract sense. Any religion divorced from practical living is not worth any attention.

Catholicism is also a way of life: here is what St Juliana of Norwich, a 14th century Catholic mystic, said:

*Sin is behovely
All shall be well and
All manner of things*

Sin or man's incapacity to escape from

error or suffering can become behovely without disconcerting one if there is a proper inward discipline and an ability to look at things in their perspective. Such a person, who can look at all with equanimity is *nitya santushtha*, the ever contented, the one above dualities.

For adjusting the lenses what is needed most is *sankalpa shuddhi*, the purity of intention and *manojaya*, winning the *manas*. *Mano nashana*, destroying *manas* and along with it all desires, all likes and dislikes, is a noble ideal but then it is not easy except for a

mahatma or *mahapurusha*. But disciplining the *manas* and holding it under control are possible with individual effort under the guidance and with the blessings of a *guru*, a preceptor.

Spiritual progress can be achieved by winning the six enemies, the *arishad Vargas*, shedding *ahamkaara* and wiping out *vasanas*. All these are possible only through looking inward. So the logical conclusion is *THINK, THINK* and again *THINK* and adjust your lenses, turning the searchlight inward.

*

TOTAL ACCEPTANCE

K. M. Kale

Total acceptance helps us
All dualities to transcend
And to the realm of non-duality
With steady steps to ascend

It's to accept sorrow
As well as pleasure
Without running after one
Without avoiding another

It's to accept honour
As well as dishonour
Without wanting one
Without resisting another

It's to accept riches
As well as poverty
Without coveting one
Without despising another.

It's to accept beauty
As well as ugliness
Without leaning towards one
Without shunning another.

Total acceptance is love
That flows to all existence
And makes possible communion
Of essence with essence.

*

THE DIFFERENCE

The Muslim Sheikh of Panipat asked Guru Nanak, "Who is the true *darvesh*?" The Guru answered:

*He who alive is dead,
And while awake asleep,
He who renounceth everything
And doth himself efface;
He who is in deep communion,
And who doth spontaneously sing,
He is a darvesh at heart.*

The Gita tells us:

*"In that which is night to all
creatures,
the self-mastering sage is awake;
that in which all creatures wake,
is night to the eyes of the seer."*

That is to say, the sages, the seekers of union with God, though living in the world, live differently than the other men of the world. The difference lies not so much in the physical appearance of their living as in the inner base or centre of their living.

Jesus said: "*The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, which when a man hath found, he selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.*"

So the seeker, though alive in the world, is dead to the worldiness and lives his heavenly way.

The initiation on the way to God is like a new life. Birth into a new life is a well known concept. It happens on many levels. Just now we are concerned with the birth into a new

life on the spiritual level. A birth into a higher life is a life dedicated to the Spirit.

In ancient India the Brahmins were called *dwij* (twice born). The Brahmin was twice born: when he came out of his mother's womb, it was his first birth (common to all creatures, when he was initiated on the path to the attainment of the Brahman, it was his second birth. A birth into a life dedicated to the attainment of the Supreme Atman.

*'Except a man be born again,
he cannot see the kingdom of God'*- these words of Christ refer to spiritual rebirth.

For the seeker this need of his spiritual rebirth remains even when there is a Divine Incarnation present on the earth. A German mystic said: "Christ may be born a thousand times in Bethlehem but if he be not born anew within your heart, you remain eternally forlorn."

When The Mother named a person *Dwij* (Twice born) or *Navajata* (New born), evidently the significance for that person would be an initiation into a second or new birth. A new birth for the attainment of the Divine. A birth into a new consciousness.

When The Mother gave the flower which she named 'New Birth' to someone on his birthday or on any other occasion, it would mean her call for a birth into a new consciousness. For reversal of consciousness.

- Courtesy Sri Aurobindo's Action - August, 2005.

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JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

Justice Alladi Kuppaswami

The three arms of the Government are the Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary. The Legislative passes the laws and the Executive gives effect to them. The role of the Judiciary is to decide whether an act passed by the Legislature or an act of the Executive is according to the principles laid down by the Constitution or according to the principles of natural justice or otherwise illegal and strike it down if it is not. If a court strikes down a law it is open to Legislature in its turn to make amends by passing another law which according to it is necessary by getting over illegality. In a recent case the Supreme Court held that private unaided colleges need not have a quota system. As the legislature felt that it was necessary to have a quota system even in private, unaided colleges it was trying to introduce the need to follow the quota system even by private unaided colleges by passing suitable quota system. It was unfortunate that the Chief Justice of India observed that in such a case courts should be abolished.

Sometimes judges find it unjust to strictly interpret the law while their sense of justice differs from it. But judges have found that in many cases by giving a liberal interpretation to the words of a statute it is possible to serve the ends of justice. This is termed as "Judicial Activism". Sometimes judicial activism can

also be consistent with judicial restraint. If a legislature passes progressive laws judges who practise judicial restraint are truly activist as they allow progressive laws consistent with justice to remain unaltered. If however, in such a case, they practise Judicial Activism and strike down such laws as they are not according to their views of justice the activism results in conservatism as it happened in the case of the judgment of the Supreme Court holding that there need not be any quota system for minorities in private unaided colleges. In both cases of activism, the judge does not interpret the law literally but gives it an extended interpretation which according to him will serve the ends of justice and he is therefore termed activist. Paradoxically a judge who practises judicial restraint may be more progressive than an activist judge when he allows a progressive law to remain by practising restraint. As I said in one of my speeches on Judicial Activism a too activist judge is like a bull in a china shop creating confusion in the minds of the legislature as well as of the people.

In the case of Executive action the expression "Judicial Activism" is inappropriate when the Executive is guilty of inaction or illegal action the court has to step in and do its duty in one case or set aside the illegal action in the other. In either case Judicial Review is

mistaken for Judicial Activism.

Previously courts had to wait until aggrieved persons filed cases before the court and requested the court to set aside illegal action. Now what is known as "Public Interest Litigation" has come to be in vogue. Illegalities are brought to their notice by bodies, institutions and social workers as they find that the aggrieved party or parties are too poor to go to court. Sometimes courts act *suo moto* (of their own accord) when they find illegalities are perpetrated by the Executive or where illegalities exist in society. Such action is not Judicial Activism as the courts are doing their duty. But there is a danger of judges acting

beyond their limits in trying to show themselves as champions of the oppressed. This is to be avoided. As remarked often judicial tyranny is worse than executive tyranny as in the former case there is no remedy and in the latter there is the remedy by Judicial Review.

* Some of the ideas in this article have been addressed in an article by me titled "Judicial Activism" published in my book *The Constitution: What It Means to the People* (Hyderabad: S. Gogia & Company, 2000).

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HUMOUR IN BHAGAVADGITA

The following is a humorous paragraph based on BHAGAVADGITA sent by Sri Alladi Kuppaswami, Retired Chief Judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court:

A man who committed murder and was about to be sentenced to death by a Judge quoted from the Bhagavad Gita: "A man who considers him a killer and one who considers himself being killed—both of them do not know—one does not kill and the other is not killed." He therefore asked the Judge to acquit him. The Judge said, "True—I do not kill you by sentencing you to death nor are you killed. I therefore sentence you to death."

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NATURE'S BARDS

K. V. Ramana Rao

Mother Nature, take me where the song-birds pour,
Shaping sweet Shelley-like poets more and more,
Fetch for me the wine of the song-jet of birds
Singing, rhythm-drunk, like the Muse-awakened bards.

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TRIVENI

OCT - DEC, 2005

AN ANACHRONISTIC OBSERVANCE

Prof. Hazara Singh

May 30 is observed as a national holiday in the USA. To begin with, it commemorated those who were killed in the Civil War that broke out on the abolition of slavery. A few southern states, which had been against it, did not show the required enthusiasm. It was considered discreet to keep including in that national remembrance all the Americans who lay down their lives from time to time in active service. The list is kept updated.

The corresponding event in India is Army Day which marks that an Indian officer took over as commander-in-chief of the army of independent India on January 15, 1949 fulfilling the aspiration of Indianization of army.

On January 26 (Republic Day) and August 15 (Independence Day) the Prime Minister of Socialist Secular Sovereign Democratic Republic of India, prior to his participation in the main celebrations, goes to the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate to lay a wreath there. That monument commemorated those native soldiers who got killed in the First World War to save UK and its allies from the onslaught by Axis Powers. Later the names of those who fell in the Second World War were also added. Both the wars were not a part of our freedom struggle. The title of the inscribed entries endorses that. The laying of wreath by the Head of the Government of India on that monument, in spite of its changed

name, amounts to paying obeisance to our once fetters of slavery.

The national pride enjoins that a new memorial be erected. The remembrance list may begin from the day the Indian Army landed at Srinagar to drive out the tribal raiders. History is the judge that the Indian army saved Kashmir and Kashmir in turn upheld the secular fabric of India.

The Diamond Jubilee of independence of India falls in 2007. It will be appropriate to raise a befitting memorial before these celebrations begin. The Army Day be observed as a national event on January 15 every year.

A befitting memorial be also set up to acknowledge the contribution of Indian National Army to our freedom struggle. The site for that be arranged near the Red Fort as 'To Delhi' was the war cry of INA. The existing memorial at India Gate be classified as a place of archives.

The school textbooks seek corresponding revision. The Saragarhi post (NWFP) adventure was an act of rare valour in which more than twenty native soldiers of Indian Royal Army laid down their lives while fighting against a besieging tribal horde. They were given each posthumously the highest gallantry award, Victoria Cross. The episode has been recently included by the Central

(Continued on page 25)

D. H. LAWRENCE AND SRI AUROBINDO ON EDUCATION

Dr. M. S. Ramesh

How little those formalities, to which
With overweening trust alone we give
The name of Education, have to do
With real feeling and just sense.

Wordsworth.

The purpose of this article 'D. H. Lawrence and Sri Aurobindo on Education' is to give a comparative account of the two writers' sense of education as revealed in their criticism of modern education in non-fictional prose writings. The former made his name essentially as a great novelist and critic, while the latter as a philosopher and yogin. Neither of them was a practising academician or a professional educationist. To raise and answer the question "what was it in the nature of the modern age that provoked them to devote so much time to a subject which is normally the chosen field of specialists?" is really to make an honest attempt to come to grips with their sense of life. It is because their richer sense of life reveals itself most effectively in their sense of education and in their criticism of the 'modern universal education', a pure product of the mental conscious western civilisation that was introduced later in India also during the British rule. In other words, their criticism of modern education does not exist, and as such cannot be studied, in isolation from their criticism of the modern civilisation in general. Nothing would be more ludicrously wide of

the mark than to treat their criticism of modern education without looking into its deeper references - without its subtler relations to their penetrating criticism of the modern age and civilisation and to their profound sense of life.

Sri Aurobindo is also, like Lawrence, too great a mind to treat education as a separate or specialised subject. His speech on "Oxford and Cambridge" on the occasion of the Baroda College social gathering in 1899 shows the rich sense that he has of education - the sense that education is a subject inseparably related to the question of living, and that educational institutions are not merely to impart information, but also to mould the character and the mind of a man. What all this amounts to is that both Lawrence's and Sri Aurobindo's sense of education has its deep roots in their sense of life and of its purpose, and that it is only because of this reason that it matters so much to us.

Lawrence is not an educationist; nor is he a scholar of any sort whereas Sri Aurobindo had the best kind of education in England. But despite this vast difference in their educational background, Lawrence and Sri Aurobindo strike us as astonishingly similar in their criticism of the modern civilisation and of the modern education

It is on two major grounds that

Lawrence and Sri Aurobindo come down so very heavily on modern education. First, it does, by giving an air of respectability and universal acceptance to the idea of 'getting on in the world', encourage a mad scramble for philistine success now tacitly, now openly. It is steeped in gross materialism, though it professes many high ideals.

The tragedy that this connection between the idea of getting on and modern education has now come to stay. If to the lower class, it is a means of escape from the mines - from the 'dirty-work', to the middle class, it is a means of earning their living and a mark of sophistication also. And to the upper class, it is an essential decorative thing - a cosmetic like a lipstick or a scent. And the modern educational system is so cleverly designed as to satisfy the expectations of all the classes.

What good can come out of such a horrible system? What else could this universal education, which is centred on 'the idea of getting on', do but to produce rank philistines, self-important imbeciles and unmanly intellectuals?

After the Western impact, the Indians were also infected with this philistinism, and that is why Sri Aurobindo laments, "We in India have become so barbarous that we send our children to school with the grossest utilitarian motive unmixed with any disinterested desire for knowledge; but the education we receive is itself responsible for this" (The Harmony of Virtue 125 - 126). In fact, Sri Aurobindo calls the successful

educated man produced by this system an 'economic barbarian' and says: His idea of civilisation is comfort, his idea of morals social respectability, his idea of politics the encouragement of industry. He values education for its utility in fitting a man for success in a competitive or, it may be, a socialised industrial existence, Science for the useful inventions and knowledge, the comforts, conveniences... (The Human Cycle 87)

The second major reason for which they condemn this educational system is that it crams the mind of a child with facts that have nothing to do with its own experiences, thus mutilating its natural growth and doing it permanent harm. What happens in all modern schools in the name of imparting knowledge is that ideas of all sorts are injected and pumped into the brain, thereby arresting and stultifying true dynamic development. Both are up against this fashionable cramming business and stick to the age-old concept of education. Lawrence points out that the very origin of the word 'education' suggests that it means the exact opposite of the meaning attributed to it in the modern days:

Education means leading out the individual nature in each man and woman to its true fullness. You can't do that by stimulating the mind. To pump education into the mind is fatal. Every extraneous idea, which has no inherent root in the dynamic consciousness, is as dangerous as a nail driven into a young tree. (Fantasia of the Unconscious 76 - 77)

What Sri Aurobindo says about the purpose of education does, even admitting the possibility of many different shades of meaning, coincide with what Lawrence says in essence:

The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he himself who must be induced to expand in accordance with his own nature. There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange before-hand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues, or be prepared for a pre-arranged career. To force the nature to abandon its own dharma is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection. If anything has to be brought in from outside, it must be offered, not forced on the mind. A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development. (On Education 20 - 21)

Whoever reads these passages would certainly be struck by the many points of similarity between them. The thing is that these two minds could, with so vast a difference in their family and educational background, strike such a great deal of concord in their sense of education because of their sound knowledge of human nature that expresses itself in their common perception that our object in education must be to know the psychology of the child as he grows into a man and to found our systems of teaching and training upon that basis. But unfortunately we do not know how much harm we do to a child's mind by forcing into it extraneous ideas and facts.

Sri Aurobindo always laid great emphasis on the cultivation of powers of thought and concentration, which runs counter to the present system of rote learning.

Swami Vivekananda also speaks of it in his own forthright style: Education is not the amount of information put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. (My India 91)

Lawrence describes the modern school as a very elaborate railway system: School is a very elaborate railway system where good little boys are taught to run upon good lines till they are shunted off into life, at the age of fourteen or sixteen or whatever it is. And by that age the running-on-lines habit is absolutely fixed. The good big boy merely turns off one set of rails on to another. And it is so easy, running on rails; he never realises that he is a slave to the rails he runs on. Good boy! (Phoenix II 579)

It is but too natural for us to fail to see how this parrot compulsion of forcing extraneous ideas at last kills all capacity for real feeling, original thinking and spontaneous action - a perception poetically enacted in Lawrence's poem 'Snake'. "How the voice of education is too powerful to allow for any instinctive or spontaneous action" is the theme of the poem. It expresses two very ambivalent

feelings - there is the 'educated' repulsion and prudent common sense urging the poet to kill the 'dangerous' snake; against this, there is the poet's warm, instinctive liking for the snake. Finally, the voice of education triumphs. What wins is the idea that education has inculcated in the human mind that golden snakes, however beautiful and harmless, must be killed, for they are dangerous. Our education has, by making us mentally conscious, killed all capacity for feeling, and in the higher emotional range we feel nothing at all.

A man produced by this modern education will naturally have lots of ideas and theories in his head and he will be, in the academic circle, looked upon as most educated and as a great scholar, but to Lawrence, such a one is not only not educated but most barbaric also. It is true that we are educated, or we think we are, in many fields of knowledge. But for all our education, aren't we, Lawrence asks, emotionally barbarous, being hopelessly uneducated in ourselves?

Wherein are we educated? Come now, in what are we educated? In politics, in geography, in history, in machinery, in soft

drinks and in hard, in social economy and social extravagance: Ugh! A frightful universality of knowings.

But it's all France without Paris, Hamlet without the Prince and bricks without straw. For we know nothing, or next to nothing, about ourselves. We are hopelessly uneducated in ourselves. [...] We wear our education just as externally as we wear our boots, and to far less profit. It's all external education, anyhow. (*Phoenix* 755)

It could thus be seen that neither Lawrence nor Sri Aurobindo deals with the question of education the way academicians or educationists do, with self-interest or academic interest. They are not only non-academic, they are anti-academic, because they know that to be academic is to be dead, and as such they deal with every thing in terms of the interests of life. In other words, their sense of education springs from their sense of life, and is all the more relevant to us at a time when theories and concepts of education seem to be getting more and more distanced from a cohesive philosophy of life. *

MY SENSES, GOD, YOUR GIFT

K. V. Ramana Rao

I "stand and stare", God, in your world all day,
 You gave me my senses, I see, I rejoice, I pray,
 I cherish your senses for they revel in Yeat's
 "Abounding jet of life", warm life's pulse-beats.

*

MOHSIN HAMID'S *MOTH SMOKE*— READING A MULTI-LAYERED TEXT

Dr. Aysha Viswamohan

In the past few decades the Indian sub-continent has witnessed the emergence of migrant writers settled in the West and bearing distinct codes of the West. Mohsin Hamid's (he is a Pakistani by birth, settled in the US) *Moth Smoke* is one such addition to that unique genre of post-colonial where sensibilities are clearly western, with all the related signs, references, and cosmopolitanism. Trained as a writer under Nobel laureate Toni Morrison at Princeton, and now a consultant on Wall Street, Hamid's *imaginaire* reconstructs Lahore, less touched with nostalgia than with issues that lie in the underbelly of his city.

The story is set in the Pakistan of 1998, and examines, what Milan Kundera calls, "The historical dimensions of human existence." (Kundera 1986:36). Thus, the tragic-comic story of the antagonist-hero is structured within the historical framework of the Great Mughals as the *Prologue* begins with, "Imprisoned in his fort at Agra, staring at the Taj he had built, an aged Shah Jahan received as a gift from his youngest son the head of his eldest. Perhaps he doubted, the memory that his boys had once played together, far from his supervision and years ago, in Lahore." (MS, p.4). We are warned at the outset that the narrative which is going to be unfolded would

be a tale of wild passions, unmitigated desires and horrifying betrayals.

Moth Smoke begins with a flashback as the "almost-hero", as described by the author, Darashikoh Shezad reminisces in jail about his life full of love, ambition and failure. The narrative, from the beginning, underlines its inherent unfinalizability as the principles start trickling inside the court of law.

Darashikoh's reflections begin from the night he attends a party thrown by his super-rich friend, Aurangzeb or Ozi—and Mumtaz, Ozi's enigmatic and attractive wife. By the end of the evening, Dara is completely taken over by the opulence, imported drinks, drugs, and his best friend's wife.

However, hash is not the only drug that has benumbed the senses of the people of Pakistan. According to Hamid, the nation's ruling class, the militia and the aristocrats are also hooked on another drug—money and the arrogance that comes with it; as Ozi defends his baldness to Dara, "all women care about is cash. And my bank account is hairy enough for a harem." (MS, p.13). And Hamid draws a vivid portrait of this addiction. The emotional drama of the lives of the novel's characters blends seamlessly with the nuclear tests in the subcontinent in 1998. In one way, the novelist uses this temporal caesura to mark the angst,

ambiguities and anxieties of his generation (Moore--Gilbert 1997:173).

We also get to hear a critique of the nuclear madness from the point of view of the non--elite. Among the rickshaw pullers, at the garage where Dara picks up his dope, there is concern that tomatoes will now be two hundred a kilo.

In such times, the faith in the power of the pen is courageous, even heroic. In Hamid's story, Zulfikar Manto (Hamid's tribute to Saadat Hussain Manto), becomes the spokesperson for the prostitutes' stories. Ozi's wife Mumtaz Kashmiri represents the most unconventional and progressive face of the otherwise decadent and emotionally desensitised Pakistani elite. She also has a double life--apart from being wife, mother, lover--she is a popular and provocative investigative journalist (mob stones the editor's office when her piece appears in the newspaper)

Metaphorically, the title *Moth Smoke* has plenty to convey. Traditionally, a moth desires something that cannot be had without risk--union. Dara's wish to join the elite leads to violence, and his affair could cost him his freedom, but his desires are too strong to be neglected. It is the hero's uneasiness of always being the outsider, yet so desperate to be the insider which fascinates Hamid. In spite of being acutely aware of the societal hypocrisies and superficialities, where an individual's worth is determined by the car he owns, Dara cannot suppress his desire to become a stakeholder in his community. His affair with his friend's wife, his drug-addiction, his willingness to commit a murder--all stem from an aching

longing to be a part of the chosen few, especially the charmed world of Ozi.

To the play of passion and power-struggle, Hamid introduces a new voice, in the form of the irrepressible intellectual, Julius Superb, a professor of economics (the eternal outsider). Unlike Dara, the professor has the courage to comment on the rot which has set in the society, and therefore, deserves to be shunned. Here is Superb's imaginative, but unambiguous look at class divisions in Pakistan:

"There are two classes in Pakistan. The first group, large and sweaty, contains those referred to as the masses. The second group is much smaller, but its members exercise vast control over their immediate environment and are collectively termed the elite. The distinction between members of these two groups is made on the basis of control of an important resource: air-conditioning.

Moth Smoke works wonderfully as an example of postmodern pastiche, with elements from history, popular culture, and literature. Hamid also romanticises the names of the characters with multi-layered richness. So, besides the two leading male characters, we have Mumtaz Kashmiri, the woman over whom the two men fight (historically, her name spells deep passions--as immortalised by the Taj Mahal and as a bone of contention between two warring brothers), Murad (Emperor Shah Jehan's son), Ozi's father Khurram (Emperor Shah Jehan's real name) Shuja, the friend who betrays Dara (Shah Shuja was Shah Jehan's son who participated in the bloody war of succession), and Ozi's son Muazzam (Emperor Aurangzeb's son who

participated in the bloody war of succession). Muhammad Ali (the boxing champion) is the name given to Dara's nephew, also a boxing enthusiast. The portrayal of Manucci Darashikoh's man-servant is another master-stroke by the novelist. Like his Italian traveller-explorer namesake, Manucci, too, is a wanderer, a man-from-nowhere, and desperate to belong.

Hamid also draws considerable material from local and global culture and ends up giving the novel a *global* flavour. Verbal surprises are strewn across the landscape of *Moth Smoke*. However, like a truly cosmopolitan voice, there is no post-colonial "other" in Hamid. With all its multinationals and cultural excesses, America, or the West, is not the enemy here; for the writer, the enemy lurks within. Without being defensive about one's local culture, Hamid, like Rushdie, does believe that cultures can exist in "melange, impurity and adulteration." (Rushdie 2003:268). Hamid does ridicule the phenomenon of globalization when he describes the root of Murad's love for English literature to the omnipresent British Council Library—but more with warm humour rather than castigation. What the writer deplores is the blind, and often laughable, fascination for *Amreeka*, with people pining for American Universities, branded t-shirts, wrist-watches and jeans, jobs at Wall Street, and Black Label. As Dara mentally notes down, "The utopian vision of Over There or Amreeka promises escape from the almost unbearable drudgery of the tribe's struggle to subsist." (MS, p.79).

The novel ends with an epilogue which

is startlingly close to the horrors of the partition, its bloody repercussions, and a nation weakened by its own people. At the same time, it also deals with apocalypse as an intertextual motif (McHale 1992: 161; Ricoeur 1983: 152-154) at three levels—the nuclear war of which the sub-continent is on the verge; the self-destructive streak that young men like Dara carry; and, of course, the burden of historical bloodletting which the sub-continent can never really shake off.

Moth Smoke works as a political metaphor since Pakistan is presented as a nation whose determination to be an international player may prove costly—clearly seen in the recent events in the country. From a terrorist-sponsoring state to a state aiding the war on terror, the country today balances itself precariously on the edge. Hamid throws an unflinching light on these moth-like flirtations with fire, hinting that all such passions result in the smoke of loss. Still, on a deeper level it serves as a brilliant allegory of human condition where the worth of an individual is reduced to their material possessions, the rich keep getting richer, and justice can be bought and sold. In Darashikoh's destruction (and in the triumph of Aurangzeb), we find the death of the virtues of tolerance, secularism and compassion. It is this thematic universality—in the tradition of the works by Nadine Gordimer, Es'kia Mphahlele and Ingo Schulze—which makes *Moth Smoke* a novel people from any part of the world can identify with.

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Physics and Potatoes

Dr. V.L.S. Bhimasankaram

That was my third or fourth visit to Germany in 1980. I had gone to Hamburg at the invitation of a Seismology Professor there, under the Senior Visiting Scientists Exchange programme between the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and its German counterpart (DAAD), for a tour of three months to study the status and exchange information on the geophysical research that was going on in our Osmania and the German Universities.

Let me give a glimpse of my experiences during my first visit to Goettingen where a strong school of geomagnetism exists. In the last quarter of 1956, I submitted my D.Sc. thesis in Geophysics to the Andhra University and was awaiting the result which used to take many months in those days, since all the examiners were invariably foreigners, mostly from Great Britain, and the thesis copies used to be sent to them by sea.

In early 1957, Government of India (GOI) granted me a fellowship to study in Germany (West Germany in those days). About that time, Andhra University conferred D.Sc degree on me and also gave me study leave to go to Germany. My teacher, Prof. B. Sundararama Rao and the *Pithamaha* of Geology Prof. C. Mahadevan, at that time also the Principal of the University College of Science of the Andhra University were both

of the opinion that I should not work for another doctorate degree in Germany. As I was already a D.Sc. degree holder., they advised me to visit two or three institutions in Germany and study different aspects of Geophysics which would be useful to me as a teacher and researcher in Geophysics, after my return to India.

From the time I landed in Germany on the previous day, it slowly dawned on me that I was unable to communicate with them since I did not understand a word of what they spoke, nor could they follow my English. I was under the mistaken impression that I knew that language sufficiently well.

At the Institute all the senior scientists were well versed in English but did not prefer to speak in this language. In fact in the first meeting I had with the Director Prof. Bartels, a renowned Geomagnetist of the day, he greeted me and spoke to me in German, and when I put a blank face reverted to English, but strongly advised me to learn German soon. I had to take his advice seriously, for my future scientific progress depended on this. But it took me some four months to acquire a fair working knowledge in this language, with the help of a stenographer in our institute whom I had to engage as a tutor and pay her from my meagre fellowship amount.

The next step for me was to search for a

place to live. At my request some colleagues from the Institute found a room for me in a private house at the foot of the hill on which the Institute was situated. The house belonged to an old couple, refugees from Czechoslovakia but of German origin, who had constructed this three storey cottage all by themselves without engaging labour. On my informing them that I was a vegetarian, they told me that they were also vegetarians. This statement made me decide to stay in this house, even though the rent was rather on the high side. How mistaken I was I came to know soon when they said that they would not allow me to cook, not even to make coffee or heat any food in my room or in the kitchen.

The institute building was old with no maintenance during the war. The space and equipment were limited and were not sufficient for all the researchers. One or two temporary sheds were put up in the early 20th century and the seismological and rockmagnetic laboratories were stationed there. But due to the dedicated work ethics of the Germans, the scholars assembled their own equipment and conducted scientific studies of a high order in the limited cellar space. The Director and his Assistants lived (with their families) in a part of the Institute building, and carried out their experiments at night in peace after the Institute closed for the day. One would be surprised that under such adverse conditions, Prof Bartels and his students turned out first class scientific work of international fame.

Unlike in India, there was virtually no

spoon-feeding guidance to the researchers by the professors. Except for a broad discussion with the professor on the topic of research the student wanted to work on, he was left for himself for fulfilling the chosen task. All this helped me after my return to our country. Apart from learning several of their new scientific techniques and approaches, I imbibed the spirit of struggling alone all by myself with whatever little equipment and facilities were available, and to put together the equipment needed. The latter indeed helped my researches in Andhra and Osmania Universities, for, the Indian Government, in contrast to the munificent grants to the CSIR and other Government laboratories, allotted very little foreign exchange to the Universities for importing equipment from abroad. (Practically no geophysical equipment was manufactured in India at that time, and the position more or less remains the same even now). Thus, my stay at Goettingen was scientifically fruitful, though my health deteriorated due to insufficient food. I lost some 20 kilogrammes of my body weight, and had to consult a physician.

After many years, I went to my old Geophysical Institute. Prof. Siebert who was one of the Assistants to Prof. Bartels at the time of my previous visit was now the Director. He was pleased to see me and took me round various laboratories. I saw with pleasure that the Institute building was thoroughly refurbished and wore a new look, and the laboratories were well stocked with

modern equipment. In short, it was a modern and expanded version of my old institute of the 50's. Later on Prof. Siebert arranged a meeting for me with his colleagues where we exchanged notes on the Geomagnetic researches being carried out in India and Germany.

In the evening, Prof. Siebert, saying that he would like to show me an interesting item, took me and a few of his younger colleagues down to a small room in the cellar. There he opened a page of a big old-looking leather bound volume and showed me an entry in the book. This was a record the Institute kept of my brief bio-data and the dates of my visit in 1957 with my photo attached. While I was pleasantly surprised to see and recognise my old, but familiar face in the photograph I was equally amazed to see that I recorded on the day of my departure, the impressions of my stay at the institute in this Visitor's Book about which I had completely forgotten. I congratulated the German Scientists on the meticulous manner in which they kept the records. The Director then opened the relevant page in the book and asked me to put down my impressions of the institute, as I saw it today. This I did happily and in glowing terms.

While looking at the Visitor's Book, I found the signature of a very famous German geomagnetist Herr Smith (His real name was changed in this narrative for reasons which would be obvious shortly.) belonging to the 18th century, recorded a few years ago. I was

very much surprised to find this entry of recent date and enquired Prof. Siebert about this unusual happening. He laughingly said, "Oh! There is a good story behind this signature" He then went on to elaborate:

The great German scientist, Prof. Smith had two sons, Prof. Siebert told us. The eldest of them was brilliant and used to stand first in all his classes. His father was very happy with his progress and had great hopes about his future. To ensure a bright scientific career for his son, father Smith put him through the University and the son Smith obtained in a few years a doctorate in Physics under the guidance of an internationally famous German Professor. However, Prof Smith was very much worried about his second son who was not interested in studies, did not attend the school regularly, and used to mix with 'undesirable characters'. As the boy grew up, the problems of father Smith intensified. Resigning himself to the inevitable, one fine morning Prof. Smith persuaded his son and put him on a boat heading for the United States, more as a punishment, like the British sent their criminals to Australia.

Prof Siebert continued, "Prof Smith's first son soon joined the faculty of a famous University and was well settled as his father used to proudly tell his friends". Then Prof Siebert turned towards me and said, "The signature you saw in the Visitors' Book was that of a descendant of the second son of Prof. Smith, who was sent away to the USA.

He then continued after allowing us to

look at the signature once again, "This young Mr. Smith from the States came to us a few years ago and told me that he was the great great grandson of the famous Prof Smith. He narrated to us how in a few months after migrating to the US, his great grand father started trading in potatoes (The exact business carried out by the migrated Mr. Smith was changed for the purpose of this narrative.), and how in a few years became a millionaire."

"My grand father", said the young visitor 'improved the business and became a leading businessman in the field of potato trading. He was often referred to as the *The Potato King* in our country'."

"While we were gaping at him in surprise, the visitor, young Mr. Smith went on, (continued Prof Siebert) 'I inherited the business and his wealth. I came to Germany, the country of my forefathers, and to this place to see the institute with which my great great grand father was closely associated. Incidentally, do you mind sir', he said haltingly and after some hesitation, while I was wondering what favour the American was

going to seek from me, '*I mean to say, you do not think: otherwise sir, if I make a donation of One million Deutsh Marks to your institute in commemoration of my famous ancestor!*' leaving me and our colleagues around me floating as charged particles in the 'n'th orbit round the Earth."

"It is partly the effect of this donation" Prof Siebert told me, "that you see in the renovated Institute building and in some of the latest equipment we got."

After this narration there were no words that could express my feelings. I was thrilled beyond description. This looked like a story in a novel.

It was then that one of the young research scholars who was with us in the cellar enquired of his Professor as to what happened to the eldest son of Prof Smith and his progeny in Germany. Prof Siebert replied philosophically, "We never heard of them"

"Oh! The American Connection!" barked some one in the gathering.

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(Continued from page 14)

Board of School Education in the textbooks. Do not we have any memorable event from our glorious freedom struggle for highlighting the deeds of patriotic zeal? The post-independence generations may feel thrilled greater on learning about the outstanding deeds of our martyrs, revolutionaries and the

INA heroes.

The national celebrations should reflect the aspirations of an independent nation. The mentality of feeling proud of our achievements as staunch loyalists of the Raj needs to be discarded.

*

INDEPENDENCE DAY - AUGUST 15, 2005

Shyam Sunder

On January 5, 1920 Sri Aurobindo replied to John Baptista, a well-known barrister of Bombay and one of the leaders of Tilak's nationalist party, who had invited him to accept the editorship of a proposed paper to be brought out from there. Sri Aurobindo was not willing to leave Pondicherry – that was the first reason stated by him for his non-acceptance of the 'tempting offer'. It was a long letter and another reason that he gave is what has prompted the present piece of writing.

He stated, "I consider that...the will to self-determination, if the country keeps its present temper, as I have no doubt it will, is bound to prevail before long. What preoccupies me now is the question what it is going to do with its self-determination, how will it use its freedom, on what lines is it going to determine its future?"

Well, this is the question which should engage us as the 15th August of this year approaches marking the 58th Independence Anniversary for India. Now, of course, for our self-introspection the question will be, "What have we done with the freedom that came to us on 15th Aug 1947?"

Come 15th August, as usual the anniversary will be celebrated with fanfare and the Government's list of 'achievements' and 'promises'. The achievements and promises

are likely to be on the same lines as in the past years. The comments and reactions of the people and the political parties are likely to be the same as usual. Nothing wrong in all that, but how many will think and reflect in an off the beat direction?

The direction in which serious thinking is needed is what Sri Aurobindo pointed out in 1948: "There are deeper issues for India herself, since by following certain tempting directions she may conceivably become a nation like many others evolving an opulent industry and commerce, a powerful organization of social and political life, an immense, military strength, practicing power-politics with a high degree of success, guarding and extending zealously her gains and her interests, dominating even a large part of the world, but in this apparently magnificent progression forgetting its *Swadharma*, losing its soul.

"Then ancient India and her spirit might disappear altogether and we would have only one more nation like the others and that would be a real gain neither to the world nor to us. There is a question whether she may prosper more harmlessly in the out-ward life yet lose altogether her richly massed and firmly held spiritual experience and knowledge.

"It would be a tragic irony of fate if India were to throw away her spiritual heritage at

the very moment when in the rest of the world there is more and more a turning towards her for spiritual help and a saving Light."

"This must not and will surely not happen;" Sri Aurobindo continues to say, "but it cannot be said that the danger is not there."

We should open our eyes to see that today, even after more than fifty-five years, the danger of which. Sri Aurobindo has spoken above not only continues to be there, but has

assumed larger proportions.

We must reflect over our actions in all these years in the light of two basic questions:

1. How far we have acted to place India on the foundation of her *swabhava and swadharma*?

2. How far we have acted in continuation of the spiritual heritage of India? We, i.e., the Indian State and the people of India.

-*Courtesy 'Sri Aurobindo's Action'*

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THE JACK FRUIT

Lalitha Kumari

Trees have tongues, the great bard of Avon
says
Their offspring too well emulate their ways
To men many a lesson they can teach
Let us study a case within our reach.

The Jack fruit looks repellent and rough.
To arrive at its core is really tough
Just as all that glitters may not be gold
All that is grisly, one need not withhold.

This fruit is restful, content and humble
Positioned anywhere it doesn't grumble
When at the root it has its lowly seat
Like a tiny tot it clasps to the tree's feet

Placed at the middle it does not bother,
Like a loving child it hugs its mother
Sometimes it is found hanging from the boughs
Like an imp it plays with its mates in rows

With ripening age in kindness it grows-
Yet its innate nature it seldom shows
With a will to do mankind a favour
It fills its heart with sweetness and flavour

No pains, no gains proves true of this big fruit:
Cross the barbed wall that resists like a brute
Then pass the netted fence and press on hard
The sleek mellow cloves will be your reward

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FRANCIS THOMSON AND GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS: A BRIEF STUDY IN CONTRAST

A. Hiriyanaiiah

This brief study in contrast attempts to reveal the differing attitudes and approaches of the two Roman Catholic Poets, namely Thomas Francis (1859-1907) and Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89).

In 'The Hound of Heaven', Thomas Francis' poem, the poet conveys convincingly a sinner's efforts to evade the pursuing love of God, and, final surrender to that divine love.

Hopkins' poems reveal the poet's awareness of created beauty as a reflection of God. His sonnets in particular orchestrate his sense of frustration and suffering. His disappointments, protests and revulsions have been stated with candour.

Thomson's celebrated poem, 'The Hound of Heaven' is the love of God in pursuit of the poet's soul till he surrenders to it. As he tries to evade the challenge, seeking consolation in human love and earthly delights, the pressure of the divine demand gathers urgency in the image of feet that pound behind him till he is beaten to his knees by the inadequacy of alternative satisfactions. The pursuit is halted when the poet realizes that the darkness of deprivation which he feared all along was nothing but the shadow of the divine hand, stretched over him in love; the offer of protection and peace, he has been all the while resisting. Majestic instancy and the clinging attempts of the sinner to the 'Whistling

mane of every wind' is piognantly vibrant.

To all swift things for swiftness did I see;
Clung to the whistling mane of every
wind.

But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, thunder-driven
They changed his chariot 'thwart a
heaven

Plashy with flying lightnings round the
spurn on the feet: -

Fear wist not to evade as love wist to
pursue

Still with unhurrying chase,
And Unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following seat,
And a voice above their beat —
'Naught shelter thee, who wilt not shelter
Me'

(38-50)

This irregular 'Pindaric ode', magnificent in its imagery conveys convincingly a sinner's efforts to evade the pursuing love of God and final surrender to that love.

With Thomson, it is the living, above all loving moving, God, with a voice charged with outstretched caressing hand, full of warmth and love.-

Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save me, save only me?

~~All which I took from thee I did but take~~
 Not for thy harms,
 But just that thou might'st seek it in my
 arms.
 All which thy child's mistake
 Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at
 home;
 Rise, clasp My hand, and come:

In the case of Hopkins, the contemporary of Thomson, it is the beauty and richness found in Nature, using 'gear and tackle' - tools used in human sense experience.

Becoming a Roman Catholic (1866) by choice; joining the Jesuit Order in (1868), his self-dedication is a total commitment of all his faculties. Religion, for him, is the total reaction of the whole man to the whole life. To him, God remains merciful father and fondler, despite his paradoxical 'dark descending' mystery, full of 'lightning and love, winter and warm':

Thou art lightning and love, I found it, a
 winter and warm.
 Father and fondler of heart thou hast
 wrung;
 Hast thy dark descending and most art
 merciful then.

Hopkins' main concern is with the attempt to bring to view the inner reality of the living world, which connotes not only the essential pattern at the heart of objects and experience but also the individual distinctiveness and uniqueness of a thing - its 'selfhood'.

His most moving poems are the 'terrible

sonnets' which record the testing of faith and moods of desolation and suffering:

I cest for comfort I can no more get
 By groping round my comfortless, turn
 blind
 Eyes in their dark can day or thirst can
 find
 Thirsts' all-in-all in all a world of wet.

Hopkins's dedication is characterised by a deeper ascetism and questing. His awareness is very Catholic from the beginning, reflected in his agonised yearning to witness the divine presence in the world;

We see the glories of the earth
 But not the hand that wrought them all;
 Night to myriad worlds gives birth
 Yet like a lighted empty hall.

To him, God 'Lord of Life' is a life-long friend, who subjects the devotee to severe test by way of defeat and thwart. Reminiscing his 'now done darkness' - all that toil, that coil, since he kissed the rod - wrestling with God, he realises all that, in the long run, was to desirable effect -- to save him.

That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer
 and clear.

Though his best poems show an agonising sense of frustration and suffering, he spells out his intense and intimate devotional approach: patience, penance, prayer; ever in quest of Him. Thomson looks at God as a pursuer, filled with love for the sinner; till the pursued surrenders.

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IS THIS THE DEMOCRACY THAT INDIA DESERVES?

C.V.G. Krishnamurthy

When the rest of the world was sleeping, India awoke from the British rule on the midnight of August 14th, 1947. 'The sun never sets in the British empire' became a myth with the ushering of the independent India. The Indian people forgot their diversity of religions and castes and fought for freedom with one voice. Amidst great rejoicing, the national tricolour flag of India replaced the time-long Union Jack.

Bloodshed and horror was the first phase of the freedom movement. Under the foolhardy hasty decision of Dyer, hundreds of freedom fighters became fodder for the guns at Jalianwala bagh. The great Hero Bhagat Singh was executed. Chandra Sekhar Azad was one of the martyrs. Bala Gangadhar Tilak who proclaimed 'swaraj is my birth right' was put in jail for a number of years. Alluri Sita Rama Raju of Andhra Pradesh was cunningly trapped and shot dead. A number of selfless patriotic leaders were mercilessly shot down.

With the entry of Mahatma Gandhi on the scene, the strategy was completely changed. 'Nonviolence and non-cooperation' were two chief weapons with which Gandhi fought. Nethaji Subhash Chandra Bose thought for a direct military attack against the British through his 'Azad Hind Fouz.' Though the paths of Gandhiji and Netaji were different, their aim was one and the same - to

relieve the motherland from the clutches of the British. Thousands of the Indians inspired by the message of Mahatma Gandhi participated in the 'Dandi Salt Satyagraha.' Bonfire of bundles of foreign cloth to discourage the foreign goods and to encourage the Swadeshi goods was another offshoot of non-cooperation.

Cotton from India was exported to British Cotton Mills and the finished cloth was dumped into India, thereby causing unemployment to the weavers in India and filling the coffers in Britain. Mahatma Gandhi being moved by the poverty of the people set an example by wearing a small piece of cloth around his loin. Many journalists and writers contributed their mite for arousing the patriotic feelings of the people about the urgent need for the liberation of the country. Swami Vivekananda was thoroughly upset by the poverty of the masses and visualized the independent India in the near future. Andhra Kesari Sri Tanguturi Prakasam Panthulu lay bare his chest to the raised guns of the police during the 'Simon go back' movement. The guns were lowered and simultaneously echoed the voices 'Andhra Kesari zindabad.' Quit India Movement determined the British to set India free in the near future.

The five year plans, the erection of huge steel plants, the construction of major irrigation

projects, establishment of scientific research centers in India were successfully completed by the government headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The progress of the country was uppermost in his mind. Spectacular development in the field of Education, Health and Transport etc. also was the result of the selfless dedicated team of Ministers and government of those days.

The wheel of time rolled on and after more than 56 years of Independence, we may take stock of the achievements and setbacks. The political leaders now need tight security wherever and whenever they move. As if it is a mockery to Gandhian principles, new bars and wine shops are opened sometimes on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. A motley of parties with diametrically opposite political ideologies now form the government. The majority ruling party is always under threat by the minority components about their withdrawal of the support if the desired number of ministries and portfolios are not allotted for them. A heterogeneous government could not always look after the welfare of the people and the progress of the country, as they may have to be busy in cajoling and satisfying the constituent parties thereby caring for the preservation or continuation of the government.

The recent elections, which witnessed the flow of money, wine and the caste animosities, speak about the rotten atmosphere in the political arena. The insecurity to the people, especially women,

focuses the present pathetic picture of the degenerated democracy in India. The cinema and television present violent scenes of bloodshed, crime, horror and indecent acts of morality in the guise of heroism. Of course, here and there, they may present the ideals of human behaviour -like love, affection, sympathy etc. But the modern youth are prone to catch up and adopt only the vulgar and violent deeds in real life, as they may not have the discernment of judging the good and the bad. For example, the advertisement about the control of 'AIDS' through the publicity media and the television is quite repugnant to the norms of decency and it is a clear violation of the fine sentiments of modest women. Unsuccessful attempts are made by the women welfare organizations to put a halt to such indecent publicity.

The few veteran freedom fighters who may be now living witnesses to the present decline of political atmosphere exclaim with frustration, 'Is this the land that launched a number of freedom fighters?' 'Is this the land that had in the past selfless principled leaders of a democratic India?'

Democracy in India is at cross roads and almost derailed. The opposition parties both in Assemblies and Parliament unreasonably stall the proceedings thereby causing unnecessary waste of public time and people's money. The hard earned freedom with sacrifices of patriotic selfless freedom fighters is thus at stake.

For setting right the undemocratic ways

(1) Polarisation of all the parties to form into one or two political groups with specific ideologies should be done.

(2) The indiscriminate defections lured by power or money should be arrested.

(3) The Reservation policy in respect of employment has to be reviewed periodically and the actual needy alone should get the benefit.

(4) The cinema and the electronic media should help to make the society better.

(5) A band of selfless political leaders should be trained from the youth.

(6) The punishment to the offenders and criminals should be proportionate to the intensity of crimes; otherwise they go scot-free into the society to perpetuate the crimes.

(7) Persons with crime history should not be allowed to participate in the Elections as their corrupt and criminal ways would percolate into the society. "Yedha Raja Thadha Praja" is a popular saying.

The above loopholes at least in the present democratic system are to be plugged hoping to secure 'semblance of good governance' in the near future.

'When Thomas Jefferson came out of the Constituent Assembly, people asked him what is the form of government they have decided for America. His answer was 'Democracy, provided you keep it.'—Editor

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SUBCONSCIOUS OUTPOURING

Dr. Manas Bakshi

Leaf's green universe
Thought's inquisitive worth;

On the dank soil
Of surrounding banalities
Our life's looted,
Our love's waiting - -

A subconscious self
Squirms within

An organic substance.

A tree in trance
Wonders
It's uprooted
If a stroke
More sensitive
To the cause of living
Blasts at once
The time-capsule.

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FREE-VERSE FRONT IN MODERN POETRY

Dr. Dwa. Na. Sastry

Though there are many Telugu Literary Associations, the Free-verse Front established by Kundurti, championed the spread of "Free Verse". Sri Anjaneyulu is known for Free verse which is his mission and objective in life. Free Verse Front is the brain child of Kundurti Anjaneyulu. Kundurti, known as the Father of Free Verse fulfilled one of the historical responsibilities through his Free-Verses Front. It was established in 1966 with the cooperation of a few friends of his. He successfully ran this organisation without seeking any kind of help either from the government or from non--literary persons or associations.

Sri Kundurti instituted some awards in the name of the Free-Verses Front to spread and encourage good poets for writing in Free-Verses. Every year he awarded a prize for the best poetic anthology. The Deed of Trust was announced in 1979. Encouraging young poets, avoiding awarding prizes to those who have already received prizes from other organisations and to the established poets are the aims of the Free-Verses Front. Kundurti never interfered with the judgement of the three member committee to choose the best poet. So far Twenty eight Free-Verses poets received this award like Seelavi, Varavara Rao, Cherabanda Raju, Sivareddy, N. Gopi,

Papineni, Kondepudi Nirmala, Jayaprabha, Yendluri Sudhakar and Afsar. These poets have been recognised by the literary world. The anthologies written by these poets represent various trends and movements in Telugu Poetry.

Though some of the anthologies are contrary to the ideologies of Kundurti, such as Progressive, Objective, Revolutionary etc., they were also awarded the prize, which shows the honesty of the founder. The value of this award was felt more prestigious than the Sahitya Akademi Award or any other award.

The Free-Verses Front endeavoured for the popularisation of the Free Verse not only through the awards but also the publication of books. "Vachana Kavita - Vividh Kavula Pathalu - DRIKPATHALU" is the first volume published in 1967 by this organisation. The anthology "Taram Taram" consisting of free verses of hundred Progressive Poets was published in 1976. This volume shows the diversification of Free Verse. "Down to the Earth" is another volume of forty poets, published in 1994 with the aim of enabling the non-Telugus to learn about Telugu Free Verse. The preface of Prof. Chekuri Rama Rao in "An anthology of Modern Telugu Poetry" praised this volume.

In my interviews with popular poets and critiques the role of Free-Verse Front received great approval in promoting and spread of Free Verse. A few of them opine that Free Verse need not be popularised as it has already been an established poetic form while some do not feel so.

On the whole Sri Kundurti fortified Free Verse and worked hard for its spread. He preached against Traditional Verse (PADYAM). He stated that poetry can be written by any body but some felt that Free Verse was diluted by this generous statement. In those times such publicity and such generosity was needed. The establishment of Free Verse strongly points out the earnest

endeavour of Kundurti and his personality.

It is not correct to say that Free Verse Front is not needed now as it is very much needed even today to encourage good poetry, and for the spread of the modern out-look. But a word - narrative poetry and long poetry should be properly recognised and appreciated as desired by Kundurti. The Free-Verse Front should give fillip to contemporary trends and movements. Today's well known poets, were also encouraged by these awards which shows that the Free-Verse Front played a pivotal role in their growth. To conclude, the Free-Verse Front has a major role to play in the years to come.

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ELEGY ON ONE'S OWN SELF

Raparla Janardana Rao

Looking life from out at Eighty!
 What a life spent full with energy hefty!
 Parents, love in plenty, friends, sweetness added-
 Education, cultural acceptance well enjoyed
 Music, flowers, fruits, sun's colours in spree
 Shame and fame entwined, the Siamese twins
 Fears, failures, successes, salad tasted
 A family reared up, and life made full
 Loved many, loved by many of regions
 Religions all pure looking, love shown,
 At this lone traveller, with journey unchartered
 At the end nothing to remember nothing to tell
 Sans name, gender, region "Real Self" bare
 Lived with words, words and words, now the great Mute.

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BHABANI BHATTACHARYA'S 'SO MANY HUNGERS!' FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS POINT OF VIEW

Dr. Krushna Ch. Mishra

Kh. Kunjo Singh (2002) observes: "Strongly influenced by the Tagorean and Gandhian ideals and inspired by the vision of a just social order, Bhattacharya wrote novels for social purpose and political value. Indeed, he portrays full-blooded men and women, the peasants and the down-trodden as victims of social forces, but possessing the strength of re-making their mother-land into a new India." (p.181) It is in this context important to reiterate that Bhabani Bhattacharya was keen to bring an end to the cult of unjust social order that turned large masses of peasants and the down-trodden into poor and hapless victims of the social forces as available under the colonial rule. He was more alert about the remaking of India; he was optimistic about the birth of a new India following Gandhi who had "transfigured the image of India and turned national idealism from its futile adulation of the past to face the reality of India as she was poor, starving and helpless, but with an untapped potential of unlimited possibilities. "(Kripalini 1968:79-80) Human Rights movement in India is very strongly aware how the necessity to bring about a just social order is very important. To-day instances are legion of how and about which issues human rights bodies are expressing their deep concern.\

Some such issues are starvation deaths, unjust and inhuman treatment towards women,

callousness of the government and administration about the public distribution and delivery system, consumer exploitation etc. Very often the rules in several areas are being exposed to public criticism as continuing to be colonial in temper and singled out for appropriate corrections. A definite consciousness is on the rise about how Free India's government, public leaders, business houses, bureaucracy have to be brought to a way so that the pattern of exploitation running down from the colonial times may be changed in favour of nationally and socially productive service.

Gandhian ideas in their application could show the issues Gandhi showed concern about are verily the issues before the human rights watchers and activists to-day. Gandhi as an anti-colonial activist has been described by Ashis Nandy (see Leela Gandhi 2001) at par with Frantz Fanon. In the context of our discussion Gandhi needs to be recognised as the champion of human rights causes because of his proper study of colonialist purposes and programmes as essentially inhuman as well as dehumanising. Fighting for the several rights and several freedoms including the 'freedom to be free', Gandhi was untiring in his efforts to convince that colonialists were the worst offenders against humanity and violators of human rights. Bhattacharya in his efforts to

make his art socially relevant and useful is very forceful when in *SO MANY HUNGERS!*, he shows how Kajoli's father and brother Kanu, the peasants were arrested by the colonial police for their participation in the Civil Disobedience movement or when he talks of the mass participation of men and women in the Quit India movement of 1942 voluntarily seeking arrest by the colonial rulers. The success of the tactics of propaganda and agitation in a peaceful way about which Bhattacharya talks of conforms to the accepted ways of the present day human rights groups all over the globe.

By taking up the issue of 1943 Bengal famine and by showing how men and dogs would fight for rubbish for food, how man would eat root and twig and leaf in a desperate bid to survive, how the money-minded business people like Samarendra Basu would sell rice at high and unaffordable prices, how women like Kajoli in sympathy for her family would not hesitate to turn into prostitutes (though Kajoli changed her mind and became a newspaper vendor), how village after village would be empty of people in their flight to cities or wherever it could be for a crumb of bread. Bhattacharya has tried to make the message reach the readers that colonial administration in its neglect of the Indian subjects and in its

gross lack of responsibility in the situation made of the famine of 1943 the worst tragedy that any nation would like to remember only in hatred and fear – hatred against the callous and careless exploiters among the base and inhuman colonial masters and fear about free India's days not becoming that nightmarishly tragic once again. Informing, sensitising, convincing, canvassing and agitating into the appropriate nature of desired action are the certain definite ways in which a work of literature could serve the people and the world.

Bhattacharya's *SO MANY HUNGERS!* moves the readers with the photographic description of the tragedy of men, women and children dying in tens of thousands. The novel exposes the colonial criminality and savagery as something grossly inhuman and utterly inexcusable. It presents the tragedy of the innocent Kajoli family as 'the premonition and symbolic shape of devastation affecting the whole Bengal.' (Singh 2002:81) By all this, *SO MANY HUNGERS!* definitely arouses the pity, sympathy, fear, anger and spirit of general revulsion and agitation in the readers. To this end it would never be quite out of frame to look upon this novel of Bhattacharya as a significant Human Rights document of lasting value. *

UNESCO pointed out that out of 128 countries where Jews lived, before Israel was created in 1948, only one country, India, did not persecute them and, allowed them to prosper and practise Judaism in peace and in public. *

ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SPEECHLESS COMMUNICATION

Dr. Pretti Kumar

Economic and social subordination and the absence of political representation characterize the living conditions of women. Part of the living conditions are the "conditions of the expression", those that are latent in daily verbal or nonverbal language as well as in the codes of mass media. In this sense, the silence of women can be simultaneously from various perspectives. One of these is that a non-verbal language expressed in the domestic environment compensates verbal silence.

Aboriginal women have engaged in individual and collective projects of recovering historical memory. Communication in this context represents a strategic venue for struggling against the silence of a community's ethnic and cultural dynamics, with memory, speaking, and writing providing the space for the creation of group alternatives and the drafting of an oppositional agency. Indian Tribal Women and their communities maintain the connection between the past and the present at the grassroots: their quilts for example have sustained a culturally distinctive tradition and an alternative grassroots communication.

Embroidery- is the needlecraft, which has been passed on for generations by "the needle painters"- from mother to daughter and is largely a "dowry" tradition. The pastoral tribe's mainstay for the women has been

embroidery. Very often, the embroidery traditions in each region point to communities, and reveal caste identities, status and the village of its origin. There is a universal thread running through the entire fabric, a passion for creative expression, for beauty and for traditional continuity. It covers historical perspectives, regional expressions, pastoral and nomadic traditions.

Quilts, simply stated, are both objects and a means of warmth and comfort. Whereas Euro-American generally makes a distinction between art and craft between display and use, African-American art is often a functional part of everyday life like the Indians. African-American quilts possess a multiplicity of value even further in their illustrative significance of sociopolitical communication systems identified within a visual vocabulary of patterns chosen by quilter herself.

The Euro-American quilter frequently signed her quilts by stitching her name and the date the piece was completed into the top corner of the quilt. The signature of an African-American slave woman, who under slavery was denied her birth name along with any other public expression of her individuality, was expressed through an assemblage of color and pattern encoded with ritual, ancestry, and individual creativity. In African-American quilts off-beat patterns are created when the

strips of contrasting bright colors are juxtaposed in asymmetrical patterns, causing the colors to clash visually, or hit each other.

If we look at the quilt as a community, with each piece functioning individually while simultaneously being part of the whole, we can see that the quilt, like jazz, is a democratic ensemble. The figures include fish, people and houses, biblical scenes, biblical scenes are accompanied by patterns that illustrate meteorological events that occurred during and before her lifetime. They are visual testimonies, each carrying a message to those of her own era and of the generations following that speaks of community support, personal strength, and religious belief. Various African-American women's clubs have collectively produced quilts as a means of documenting specific historical events or a celebrating personal or community achievement.

Contemporary gallery exhibitions of African-American quilts have continued to stimulate discussion and historical and artistic appreciation. "Stitching Memories: African-American Story Quilts", a travelling exhibition organized by William College Museum of Art, distributed a flyer to patrons that distinguished six types of story quilts that were made with the applique technique:

"Wrapping Home Around Me" quilt refers to some one's home. "Articles of Faith" quilts, depict biblical stories. "Histories", quilts tell stories of both United States and African-American history. "Family Stories" quilts recall after-dinner family gatherings. "Fabrications"

quilts show fictional narratives written by the quilters. "Womanist", quilts tell the stories of personal achievement. Patterned quilts have a uniform motif repeated across the surface of the quilt and that bear traditional name like Log Cabin, Basket of Flowers, and Wild Goose were also included.

The Indian Tribal textiles almost always demonstrate the identity of the community. Border designs and colors used for sarongs or shawls define the village of the tribe. Motifs in the northeast symbolize mountains, streams, houses, snakes, birds or a temple. Designed priests wear specific colors on ritual occasions. There are ways of differentiating between a shawl woven by a hill tribe and a plains tribe and the chieftain's shawl is always distinct. Sometimes shawls are woven by one tribe and embroidered by women in another tribe, as among the Dongrias and Damas in Orissa. The use of the colors symbolizes forest, fertility, unity and peace, gods and the sacrifices of animals.

Artifacts such as cattle belts, buttermilk chums, spice grinders, blanket, Jewellery, totems, garments and votive articles have the unmistakable imprint of community identification. It is only after these serve their basic purpose, whether ritualistic or utilitarian that they become crafts for the marketplace. A better understanding of their skills and offerings to the composite culture of India will help in preserving the true value of these crafted objects.

The delicate art of the *ledra* which means

“waste clothes” is a source of tribal inspiration, maternal strength and spirituality. Yet it also draws attention to the cultural economic and environmental crisis wrought on tribal communities by technological development.

On textiles across the country the motif is worked on cotton, silk and wool. In the coastal areas such as Orissa and Bengal, the fish is a much-loved design. The ikkat weave of Orissa employs it in the *pallus* and borders of the Sambalpur and Paripada saris and in the sari text as well. So too in Bengal, where the Dhonekhali can have rows of fish running across in horizontal stripes throughout the text.

In Andhra Pradesh, the fish worked as gold motifs surface on the *pallus* of the fine cotton Venkatagiris. Kalamkari is another famous craft of painted and printed fabrics in Andhra Pradesh. It derives its name from Kalam or pen with which the patterns are traced. It is an art form that developed both for decoration and religious ornamentation. The discovery of a resist-dyed piece of cloth on a silver vase at the ancient site of Harappa confirms that the tradition of Kalamkari is very old. Even the ancient Buddhist Chaitya Viharas were decorated with Kalamkari cloth. The great Alexander is also supposed to have acquired this Kalamkari cloth. With their roots in temple rituals Kalamkari cloth also followed the old tradition of religious mural paintings. Craftsmen painted the narratives of religious legends from which people learnt the stories of their gods. Bards recited verses describing these episodes, using the paintings as illustrations. Richly displayed episodes from the Puranas and mythological material form the themes.

The waves, the fish, the swan, the lily and even the crocodile have found representation in a continual thread from the Indus Valley civilization to the present.

If the river personified as a beautiful female form is portrayed on stone by the sculptor, the undulation of her waves has inspired the weaver and craftsman. Chief among these is the lovely design of the *leheria* (waves), of the Rajasthani textile idiom. Favored as monsoon wear in the desert region, they bring memories of cool dancing streams at all times to minds weary of a parched landscape.

Typical of Jodhpur, Udaipur and Jaipur, the *Leheria*'s traditional blend of colors are five - *Pancharanga* - or seven - *Satrang*. Headwear fit for royalty! And it was truly a prized item in the wardrobe of Rajput princes.

Stripes that owe their origin to the river are also found in tribal weaves. In Assam and Manipur, the loom is wielded with such an unerring eye for symmetry and impact, that white and red or maroon alternate in striking patterns on the wool and cotton. Weave and embroidery complement each other in the designs of the *phanyeks* or *lungis*, which the women wear. The stunning black borders are embellished with embroidered fish, circles and flowers.

The earliest incarnation of the Lord in Hindu religious belief is logically from the waters where life began. The auspicious Matsya brings progeny, riches and food.

The popularity of the aqua symbol is not confined to the coasts. In interior North Bihar, thrifty rural women sew together discarded saris into quilts. Then with needle and thread,

they create magical embroidery called the *Sujuni* on the cloth, which makes it vibrantly new. Flowers and trees, birds and bees spring up and so too the curved form of the fish.

The Nakshi Kantha or embroidered quilt is typically Bengali. These are still to be found in various parts of Bengal. Fairdpur, Rajshahi and Jessore are famous for the embroidery made by village women using layers of old saris with the colorful threads taken out from the seams or borders of the simple everyday saris woven by the local weavers.

The lotus is the most enduring aqua symbol in Indian philosophy and art. Synonymous with perfection, it is the *peetam* (pedestal) of Lakshmi, Saraswati and the Buddha. The lotus blooms everywhere in Indian craft - on Kalamkari, ikkat and Kanchipuram textiles and its many petals and seeds represent fertility.

The Rajasthani bandhini, the colorful and elaborate tie-and-dye process employs this symbol of fertility.

Professor Victoria Rivers, Department of Environmental Design, University of California, explained the "Layers of Meaning, Embellished Cloth for Body and Soul", linking it with surface ornamentation on textiles, conveying powerfully, relationships with ancestors, gods and spirits.

'Stitches' help express feelings, experiences, says Judith Smith. Women across the globe express their feelings about violence and war through their domestic arts.

During a meeting of PC (USA) mission pastors, Susan Ryan, coordinator of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, displayed one of the Afghan quilts. She pointed out the

red stitching that holds the quilt together. "This red thread makes me think of the blood of Christ," she said, "the true thread of hope." The Afghan quilt project is life sustaining for the present and a gift of hope for the future.

Of all the discrete collections MSU Museum's quilt collections perhaps the most important is the collection of North American Indian and native Hawaiian quilts. Several museums have one or a few samples of native quilts. A handful of museums have quilts specializing in the quilts of one culture or tribe. Perhaps the chief reasons for quilters not being known to outsiders were that it is an art form that has appeared so extensively in everyday life and that it was primarily the result of indigenous cultural contact with outsiders. Considered commonplace and perceived firmly tied to a European rather than a native artistic tradition, quilts, unlike other native arts, were historically not collected or studied as items of ethnographic, aesthetic, or marketplace value. In addition, most quilts made within native communities were made for everyday use; even those made and given in ceremonies were intended for everyday use. Thus, there are few extant historical quilts in either private or public collections.

Traditional motifs are receding into the past, and sadly these women cannot recall the significance of these motifs. To quote Dr. Jyotindra Jain, "is ethnicity so frozen in the past, or is it a transforming reality with a contemporary face? If this fact is considered, we can consider craft as part of an evolution and will emerge from the close circle of bias". *

MS. SUDHA MURTY – A ROLE MODEL AND ICON

I. Satyasree

‘In an ocean of poverty and misery, whatever I do is insufficient. I’ve never felt that I’ve achieved anything in life....at the most if somebody recognizes my work, I feel good about it.’ – Ms. Sudha Murthy.

Ms. Sudha Murthy, wife of Mr. Narayana Murty of Infosys, is an icon and role model to the Indian women in general and to the youth of our country in particular. Born in 1950 into a respectable middle class family in Karnataka, Ms. Sudha Murthy has many firsts to her credit. Apart from her famous philanthropic work and social action through Infosys Foundation, she is an eminent writer, ardent teacher, devoted wife and loving mother. She had a brilliant academic record all through. She did her Electrical Engineering from BVB College of Engineering in Hubli, stood first in Karnataka and received a Silver medal from the Chief Minister of Karnataka. She pursued her M. Tech in Computer Science from IISC Bangalore, stood first in class and bagged a Gold Medal from the Indian Institute of Engineers. She teaches Computer Science at Christ College for a few hours every week, earns Rs 50,000 a year and values her financial independence greatly. She does this because she loves teaching.

Ms. Sudha Murthy published eight novels and several other technical and educational books in Kannada and in English.

Her works are translated into other Indian Languages too. Her ‘Dollar Bahu’ is serialised on Zee TV. Her recent anthology of short stories, ‘The Day I Taught My Grand Mother and the other stories’ captured the attention of the readers. Her writings are inspiring and they generally carry a moral or a message. A young man married a girl with leucoderma motivated by her novel ‘Mahaswete’.

When she was in BVB College of Engineering, she was the only girl student in her class among 250 boys. They used to rag her mercilessly. Yet, she remained undeterred as her goal was to become an Engineer. She was never absent even for a single day during the five years of her engineering studies.

Ms. Sudha Murthy was the first woman to work on the Shop Floor at Telco, Pune in 1974. A post card addressed to JRD Tata got her the job! When she was in her final semester of M. Tech in Bangalore, she saw an advertisement in the Notice Board inviting applications. The advertisement said that there would be campus interviews but women students need not apply. She got bugged when she read the last line and wanted to protest against the discrimination. She at once bought a post card and boldly wrote to JRD Tata – “Benevolent Tatas who have done so much philanthropic work, innovative Tatas who started the first Iron and Steel industry, Textile

industries – I am surprised and ashamed at your attitude toward women students. If you can do this, then any body can do it”. Surprisingly, after a week, she received an interview call from Telco and they would bear her travel expenses!

She appeared for the interview. The reasons given by the interviewing officer were that the selected candidate had to work in shifts and drive a jeep. Another reason was that a woman would quit after her marriage.

Ms. Sudha assured them that she would learn to drive a jeep, work in shifts and would not play the gender card. She accepted the challenge of learning to drive a jeep at 23, because she took inspiration from her grand mother who learned to read and write at 62. And her grand mother’s teacher was none other than 12 year old Sudha!

However, she told them frankly that she would leave the company if she got married but certainly would not quit if she received a better offer from a rival company.

The circumstances of her marriage with Mr. Murty, their setting up of Infosys and their phenomenal success, will read like a fairy tale. However, she says that people will be badly mistaken if they think that she had no hardships, no arguments with her husband and no tears in her life. She faced all the challenges with a smile and forged ahead to become what she is today. Mr. Narayana Murty pays rich compliments to her saying, “She is a happy person with the ability to see the positive in a situation. Her cheerful disposition helps her

to make friends easily. She is one of the finest managers I have seen, meticulous about completing every task on time with quality and within the available budget.” Mr. Murty acknowledges the sacrifice she made and says, “She has sacrificed so much for me and the children by giving up her job as Manager in Mumbai in 1981 to move to Pune. Without that sacrifice I am not sure if I would have been able to found the Infosys along with my six colleagues.” She is a true Sahadharmini to him.

The Infosys Foundation, established in 1997 with one of the objectives being the upliftment of the less privileged sections of the society, is headed by Ms. Sudha Murthy herself. Ever since its inception, the foundation has been taking up various social service activities in the areas of Health, Education, Rehabilitation, care of the Visually challenged, building libraries, hospitals, orphanages, schools, science centres, and organising mid-day meals for school children. In liaison with ISKCON, Infosys Foundation is contributing huge sums to the ‘Akshaya Patra’ scheme which caters to the mid-day meals of 10,000 school children in rural and urban areas of Karnataka. Yet another novel scheme, ‘Shale Ondu Granthalaya’, which is the first of its kind, is started with the sole purpose of inculcating reading habit among young children. Under this project, 10,000 school libraries in villages in Karnataka have been provided with 195 to 2000 books of different categories.

Infosys Foundation, under the active leadership of Ms. Sudha Murthy, has been doing yeoman service in all these fields and so far has donated nearly 40 crore rupees. A staggering amount indeed! And yet, she is not really satisfied with this stupendous work. She still wants to serve and give more and more. This is a good example of industry being used in the service of the society.

Unlike most women of her status, she works very hard and leads a simple and austere life. She does not have a maid at home! She says that she thinks twice if she has to spend Rs. 10/- on an auto when she can walk upto her house. The couple made a conscious decision to live a simple, middle class life and even now continue to live in a modestly furnished Two-bedroom house. Her house has no lockers because she has no jewels. She wears stone earrings which she purchased in Bombay for Rs. 100/-. When she visited Kasi some years ago, she vowed to give up

shopping, because it is an Indian custom to renounce something which one likes most. Since then she has neither gone for shopping nor bought a sari for herself. She does not carry a purse. Her secretary or driver would keep some extra cash with them for her use. However, she promptly settles her accounts every evening. Her divine simplicity lends a glow to her face and a stately dignity to her bearing.

As the head of Infosys Foundation, she receives 10,000 applications per year and more than 120 calls every day, seeking donations. But she has learned to segregate the hood-winkers from the genuine because she strongly believes that "Philanthropy is a profession and an art." She runs the Infosys Foundation the way Mr. Narayana Murty manages the Infosys in a thoroughly professional manner. She is a shining example to men and women.

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The oral tradition of Vedic chanting has been declared an heritage of humanity by UNESCO. In a meeting of jury members on November 7, 2003, at Paris, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, declared the chanting of Vedas in India an outstanding example of heritage and form of cultural expression. The proclamation says that in the age of globalization and modernization when cultural diversity is under pressure, the preservation of oral tradition of Vedic chanting, a unique cultural heritage, has great significance.

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USA-based IEEE has proved what has been a century old suspicion in the world scientific community that the pioneer of wireless communication was Prof. Jagdeesh Chandra Bose and not Marconi.

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VITALISING ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM – TASKS AHEAD

S. V. Raghunath

Education is a process of imparting knowledge and skills to enable the individual to live with dignity and honour. The crux of education is to know what is not known. Programmes for educating the non-literate adults in the age group of 15-35 were initiated with a view to empowering the common man and enabling him to have access to the opportunity structure created by the *state* as far back as 1968 with the launching of 'Farmer's Functional Literacy'. This was the first major initiative of the Government of India implemented through the State Governments, and reputed voluntary organisations in the country. It was in the year 1977 backed by *political will* of the nation, the National Adult Education Programme was launched to make the illiterate adults in the country functionally literate. Subsequently the Prime Minister's 20 Point Programme, National Educational Policy 1986 and Programme of Action 1992, National Literacy Mission (1988), Total Literacy Campaign, Sarvashiksha Abhiyan were initiated from time to time in place of the earlier ones so as to suit the declared policies of the political party that came to power in later years.

The objectives of adult education programmes include literacy, functionality, awareness, numeracy, capacity building for ensuring quality implementation of the

programmes initiated by the developmental departments. It enables the masses to take active part as equal partners in the democratic set up to work for the progress of the country in realising the avowed objective of transforming the country into a developed nation.

While it is necessary to continue literacy programmes for non-literates, education of the semi-literates the newly educated should also receive equal emphasis in the twenty-first-century. Updating of professional knowledge, citizenship education, health education, empowerment of women, adult education in the new economic policy, research in adult education should receive top priority.

In order to realise the objectives of planned development, the programme of adult education in the twenty-first-century needs to be diversified and comprehensive in nature. Adult education should enable the community as a whole through the process of social change and increased self-confidence to effectively participate in *national development* ensuring social justice and allround economic development.

It is therefore necessary that the programme should consist of variety of need-based programmes and meet specific needs of different groups of learners. It is to be perceived as a programme of life-long

education as the needs of learning continue to change and expand over a period due to changing socio-political, economic and demographic scenario and improve the quality of life of the people.

Some of the programmes/priorities envisaged for adult education in the new millennium are stated below.

Role of Local Bodies in Administration:

The literacy programme needs to be decentralised to give desired results as visualised by the National Policy of Education-1986. The policy emphasised the need to decentralise planning and administration process from district to village level. To make decentralisation possible, the state governments have to play an active role in the process. The programme of adult education should not be seen solely as a centrally sponsored programme. It would be ideal if democratically elected Panchayat Raj institutions are actively involved in this programme. The Panchayats could be given total responsibility to eradicate illiteracy in the area in which they function. But to achieve this objective, the Panchayats have to be provided with necessary academic and technical support, funds and facilities. The smaller the area, the greater would be the scope for people's participation. When an area is small the programme tends to be more effective and transparent.

With the limited resources available at the disposal of the Government, it is desirable that village school be made the centre of

activity, a fulcrum for both formal and non formal/adult education. The school should become a *community centre*, with an objective to improve the community life. It should address the needs of the people such as welfare, their economic development, recreation, vocational education etc., An adult education teacher may be made responsible to take care of education of both out-of-school children and non-literate adults.

Post - Literacy & Continuing Education

Programmes: Productivity of the people determines the quality of the society of which they are the members. Society is run by adults who make decisions. Ours is a heterogeneous society with varied socio-cultural and economic background. The nature and quality of the decisions made by adults directly affect the nature of quality of our life both present and the future. Hence providing opportunities of education to those who have already had formal education at primary or upper primary level is not only desirable but also essential.

Continuing education programmes may be planned to achieve the following learning experiences; to learn and understand new and viable occupations as present skills for jobs become technologically obsolete. The knowledge explosion changes the volume and content of knowledge so fast that one's knowledge acquired earlier tends to be incomplete and obsolete, unless it is continuously augmented, revised and updated. In progressive, competitive societies, continuous updating and replenishment of

knowledge is a necessary condition of survival and perpetual personal development so that every individual may further his intellectual and emotional growth throughout his life.

Education of the Elderly: In view of improved health care, longevity of the people has improved resulting in the growth of senior citizens. By the turn of this century there will be about 300 million senior citizens (those aged 60 and above) in India. These chronologically old people require new competencies and skills to improve their quality of life. There is hardly any programme of adult continuing education which can enrich their lives. Some developing and developed countries have been organising programmes for the elderly. There are schools for the aged in China. The training programme include courses of general, specific and cultural knowledge, research in agriculture and "experience exchange". "U3A (Universities of the Third Age) programme in some European countries make older persons aware that they are still a part of the society, and that they are contributors and not dependents. In fact there is greater realisation that these human resources with rich experience endowed with skills, knowledge and abilities are to be harnessed.

Emphasis on Women Empowerment: In *Nation building* it is essential that women assert their rightful position and be powerful socially, psychologically, economically, culturally and politically. Hitherto women have been made to be submissive, subservient

allowing men to take all major decisions and lead in all spheres of life. Psychological empowerment necessitates reversal of patriarchal order of doing things. It calls for developing competencies in women to make decisions at personal and societal level and lead their lives as equal partners. It means development of self confidence and self esteem in women which will pave the way for creating an egalitarian society.

Human Rights: The first basic human right to equality is denied by our society. Adult Education has to play an important role to address this denial not only of the learners who are the victims but also those who violate this human right. The study and understanding of the 30 articles of human rights will bring home the fact that these articles are being violated every minute of the day.

Development of Scientific Temper: Adult education in the 21st century has to take science and technology to the common people. Practical aspects of the science in common man's day to day life should be brought home to the people in rural and urban areas so that scientific temper, spirit of enquiry is created for upliftment of those people steeped in superstitions. Universities, NGOs and educational institutions have to play significant role in this direction. The need is to provide adequate support for such programmes so that the message of scientific temper reaches the masses.

Impact of Globalisation: In the new economic policy, structural adjustments are

being made. This has put many people out of jobs due to modernisation and automation. Adult Education has now to play a wider role to meet the emerging demand for education, training and retraining of people so that they are in a position to face the competitive labour market.

Unemployed and under employed especially those in the rural sector constitute the largest group among the weaker sections of the society. Adult education should provide skill development and income generating programmes for them. This would be possible if the network of Jana Sikshana Sansthan is expanded and there is a JSS at every Mandal/Block. Skill development programmes entrepreneurial skills have to be provided to the rural masses so that they would opt for self employment instead of migrating to urban centres hunting for jobs, which is becoming a great health hazard and an environmental problem to the society. The workers in the unorganised sector in the urban areas should also be provided with opportunities in training and upgrading their technical and vocational skills to improve their quality of life. They should be educated to understand that they should protect themselves from undue exploitation by vested interests. They should be helped to become self-reliant and competent to solve their own problems.

Role of the Government Departments:

The responsibility for control and administration of adult education by and large remains with the Education Department of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. To give adult education a wider role, the other ministries should also share the responsibility. In Thailand most ministries have responsibilities for atleast one component of

adult education.

Impetus to Research: Adult Education has been undergoing tremendous change in terms of policy, programme and practice during the last two and half decades. These changes at many a time have been undertaken without sufficient feedback from the field. The evaluation studies have been undertaken for some projects but the suggestions, recommendations of these studies have been ignored while designing the new programmes. The adult education programme is directly related to people and their problems. It can promote self reliance among the people in solving their problems. But these problems could be solved effectively only when action and applied researches are available. The quality and effectiveness of adult education programme depends to a large extent on research and investigation by which it is backed. It is research which can develop alternative models for adult education including literacy. Research alone can give answers to many questions and better insight into problems relating to adult education. Adult education programme should have explicit policy of promoting empirical researches in adult education. The research should cover the broader aspects of adult education conforming only to literacy/post literacy programmes.

Research should be conducted at all levels. It should not be the responsibility of the Universities alone. Grass root level organisations should also undertake applied and action researches for which they should be provided with necessary training and financial assistance.

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MY LAST REWARD

P. K. Joy

I am writing this letter from my grave
On the day you put me to rest
To thank you world for the reward you gave
For my sixty years' work without rest.

You have given me a last bath, really quick and cold
Wrapped my body in garments that are torn and pretty old
Whiffed some cheap perfume that has offset the body stench
And brought for me a coffin that is short by more than an inch
Laid on the body a wreath on which your name has prominently shone
Appeared as if it was meant to make your big deed known.

On the path leading to the graveyard you have strewn some flower petals
And engaged undertaker's van, a moving bundle of rusted noisy metals
A funeral service you read out from some book's preprinted pages
And have paid the gravedigger the prescribed minimum wages.

The sigh of relief you let out as you left the gate of the graveyard
To search for my keys, surprisingly wasn't the last part of the reward
Late in the day you observed in the office a three minutes' silence
And even sent to my bereaved wife a letter with feigned condolence!

2

Oh men! You are thinking that you've fooled me with these doles
And that I had expected much more from you mean souls.
No, no, folks! I didn't expect; what I say is true
For, real reward for all my service doesn't come from you.

The biggest reward is my contentment that I've served you to my best
And to you my fellowmen I've always been sincere and honest
The Lord had mercifully bestowed on me the strength and will to work
And I've faithfully employed them to serve Him through you folk.
When He calls me to produce to Him my book of account to check
You don't know but I know well how good my book will look!

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THE PRACTICE AND APPRECIATION OF POETRY

Dr. Arunachalam Angappan

I write because I wish to communicate something. I have a message and that message craves to be disseminated in spite of it running the risk of being dubbed crazy. You may call me a neurotic, sick, maladjusted and so on. Every divine messenger, social reformer runs this risk. Either I am at odds with the society or there is something utterly kinky, skewed about the world. I write about the social milieu of which I am a product. I cannot escape this fact.

I only write about what I intensely feel about. I am very much a part of the process of life in my time. I do not travel much back into the glamorous, glorious distant past. If I do, that is for *mutatis mutandis* only. I live here and now. I perceive things, I get affected, I write. The social milieu of his times is inescapable to any writer. Society creates, shapes the writer, and conversely the writer also can create the society—that is, if his writing is a genuinely felt product. He presents the decay which stares the reader at his face, discomfiting and embarrassing; he runs to at least put on a mask to cover that ugliness, even if he cannot drop that ugliness entirely. To that extent, the ugly, seamy, ignoble aspect is under check.

Mostly I write on the spur of the moment, that is to say, instantly. As and when and where I suffer from an intensity of feeling. It depends;

on how I am affected, how much I am affected, how deeply I am affected. Most often words simply fly about like angels in the vast universe, alight gently on the white sheet, fold their wings delicately, and Lo! There comes alive the icon, the verbal icon. As the sculptor gently chisels open the eyes of the figure he has sculpted, the whole is there in an instant. The images, symbols, metaphors—all are there obeying some intrinsic command. The long and laborious process of the sculptor chiseling the sculpture remains seemingly ungone through, just the last phase of opening the eye, it all happens so quick, so, so well ordered. May Be, there is a mental chiseling between the instant of conception and the instant of delivery, but that remains seemingly ungone, unsuffered.

Some other times, I postpone writing it down. I brood over it like Wordsworth's hen until my eggs become warmer enough for the chicks to break out of the shells; I let it, I mean the intense feeling/emotion/sentiment, to sink deeper and deeper, penetrate my person layer by layer until it sort of explodes my whole personality and drives me in search of a piece of paper and pen. I feel quiet only if I accomplished the writing. Still there are occasions, a third kind, when something agitates, possesses, tortures my soul but will not flow out, something like an air-block in a

conduit preventing liquid flow. The much-longed sense of satisfaction of expression eludes; I feel like sitting and weeping.

Appreciation of Poetry: One can understand the difficulty as well as the aura of greatness attached to the reading and meaning-making of poetry.

Nobody can be talked into enjoying poetry, but one can bring oneself to such pleasures by learning to understand individual poems. When we read a poem for the first time, a certain kind of sense comes through to us almost immediately. This is the poem's *plain sense*, sometimes called literal sense or literal meaning. With this begins, but not ends, the understanding of poem. Then we move from the plain sense to the *figurative sense*. Why should the poet use figures of speech? Can't he say it plainly? Such a question is asked as if only poets resorted to figures of speech. Remember our everyday life is peppered with figures of speech; Ex. We "lead a dog's life," "smell a rat," "got it for a song." Then there is the question of symbol. Symbols are identified and their meanings made clear by the full context of the poem.

There are other elements. It is difficult for readers to believe that such matters as rhythm and rhyme are used to convey meaning. Poetry is speech, and the voice, or tone, of the poet communicates his attitude toward the facts of the poem. A very old definition of poetry regards it as a fusion of sound and sense.

In short, a poem is a living organism

which contains the necessary elements of its own life. If the poem is a good one, every element in it contributes to its meaning.

The figurative meaning is mistaken for the hidden meaning. The right word in the right place, the intimate fusion of sound and sense, and the economy of rich suggestion are virtues of the structure of most poetry. When we read a poem we sense the language of poetry because of the devices of rhythm. It requires various kinds of scholarly information—biographical, historical, and textual, all together or separately, for an academic appreciation.

For an amateurish appreciation, an ear for words to go rapturous over the rhythmic beats, a capacity for wondering at the difference in the way the artist has perceived the subject that he himself has failed to do, and an ability to identify the various elements of which a work is composed are enough.

** Excerpts from the address delivered at the World Poetry Festival, Taiwan, March 23-25, 2005.*

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In case subscribers do not get the journal of any issue on account of postal miscarriage or for any other reason, they may write to the Managing Editor at the office address. Another copy will be sent.

They are requested not to write to the Editor.

—Managing Editor

DIGGERS' PARADISE

D. Ranga Rao

Maharshi Narada, the Narayana bhakta, in his wanderings of the three worlds lost his way one day and landed at a place unknown to him in Bhooloka, the world of the mortals. As he descended from the skies, he observed impressive buildings, temples, mosques, churches, gurudwaras and other places of worship all over the place. Graveyards and tombs, lakes and gardens, posh residential areas and stinking slums, wide roads and narrow lanes, innumerable statues and winding fly-overs welcomed him. He twanged his 'ektara', the single stringed guitar, sending an SOS to Vaikuntha, the divine abode of Lord Srimannarayana for guidance and help. He did not receive an immediate response to his emergency message as expected.

In a confused state of mind he moved about aimlessly, walking carefully looking this way and that. He frequently lost balance as his wooden sandals slipped on the stones and debris heaped by the side of trenches on the roads. People sped past on their two wheelers unmindful of him and the trenches. His head reeled as the long and large multicoloured six wheelers and vehicles on four and three wheels zoomed past their way zigzagging on the roads at great speeds, honking and hooting their horns. Narada walked cautiously to save his dear life in this dangerous place in which he set foot unwittingly. The pedestrians who were

walking along with him were trying to reach their destination balancing themselves on the earth heaped on the roads like circus acrobats, avoiding the speeding vehicles on the one side and the treacherous trenches on the other. To his dismay, Narada lost his balance a couple of times and slipped in the trenches. Passers-by extricated him from the pits staring at his strange but familiar outfit. Making confusion worse confounded, he got caught in traffic jams, from which Padma Vyuha he found it difficult to escape.

Narada Mahmnuni moved forward in a dazed condition forgetting to chant the name of Narayana, his Saviour, or to sing His glory. As he walked along to find a place of rest he came across a group of workers digging trenches on a road. Out of curiosity he asked the labourers why so many trenches were being dug and by whom. "By many departments," came the answer. The sewage department, the water works department, the telecom department and the names of half a dozen other departments which sounded strange to Narada were mentioned. In answer to his question why some trenches were left unfilled after completion of the work, the workers said their duty was to dig them and not to fill them up.

A little beyond, Narada saw officers sitting and discussing some issue vehemently.

They were planning to appoint a Co-ordinating Committee to regulate and schedule the diggings. Narada observed that there was absolutely no sense of direction, let alone logic, in their discussion. Each Committee held on to its proposal. After a noisy session the officers dispersed agreeing to disagree. In a trice a freshly laid road was dug up with great urgency and speed by a group which action distressed Narada. He heard the Chief of another Committee give an order spitefully to his men to dig the roads in the night to out-wit the other Committees to achieve the target and please their boss.

There was a sudden cloud burst resulting in a heavy downpour. Within no time the trenches got filled with water. The roads got converted into veritable rivers, the water level reaching the knees of Narada. He was shocked to see people disappearing, being sucked in by the swirling waters into gaping, uncovered manholes while a few others were carried away by the flooding drain and rain waters. Vehicles sped past splashing water on Narada, making him breathless. The more Narada walked about, the more he saw trenches. Not a single road was left without a trench being dug. He found the people docile and unmindful of what was happening. Were they resigned to a fate from which they had no escape? He asked an elderly man why the people were silent about the diggings. The old man replied that the roads were being dug as a measure to improve the living condition of the citizens. A young man who was standing by butted in "Sir, this digging started before I was born and will go on after I am dead."

The Maharshi saw many buildings demolished by roadsides which were being dug up. The scene reminded one of a bombed city. There were many such sights all along. When he enquired a khaki-clad person whether there was a quake or something, pat came the reply "road cutting." Narada thought it best to keep mum and mind his business, for he did not understand what it meant.

With his divine insight Narada made a quick survey of other prominent cities of the country. Diggings were taking place in those cities also. But the most unplanned and thoughtless manner of digging was taking place without let or hindrance in the city where he was stranded.

The single string of his ektara came to life feebly first and grew strong slowly. Narada's SOS was answered by Heaven. The thick shield of sinful, polluted and corrupt atmosphere covering the city delayed the divine massage from penetrating through it. Narada received the directions for his escape. He heaved a sigh of relief and managed to reach an old tall structure which had four minarets.

Before climbing up the structure, Narada asked the guard with a chuckle what the name of the city was. "Hyderabad", said the guard proudly. "No" said Narada with a smile. "The name of this city is 'Diggers' Paradise'. So saying he walked up to the top of a minaret, stepped on to a cloud and disappeared into the skies chanting 'Narayana', 'Narayana,' thanking his stars for his escape from the abominable place.

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HOCKEY WIZARD, DHYANCHAND – A CENTENARY TRIBUTE

Dr. I. Achyuta Rao

The nation has celebrated the birthday of Dhyan Singh, the Wizard of the Stick. DHYANCHAND was a simple soldier in Indian Army, when he started showing his talent in Hockey. His deft stick-work and amazing ball-control left fellow players and spectators awe-- struck. It was not speed or power that made him the most prolific scorer. He scored by low gentle pushes. Besides, he set up a high standard of sportsmanship and patriotism.

Even as a boy he showed extra-ordinary skill. Based on his consistently superior performance, 'D' was selected for the Indian Hockey Team touring New Zealand in 1926. With every match, his superlative skills and scoring prowess improved. He was selected for the Indian Hockey Team for the 1928 Olympics At Amsterdam (without any trials as an exception). He played centre-forward. India trounced Austria 6-0, Belgium 9-0, Denmark 5-0, Switzerland 6-0, and in the FINALS, Netherlands 3-0 (2 goals by 'D'). India won the GOLD for the first time! Just before 1928 Olympics, while touring England, he scored 36 goals in 10 matches (Team Score 72).

In the 1932 Olympics At Los Angeles, India Scored 24-1 (8 goals by 'D') against USA in the Final. India won GOLD again!! (In the 1935 tour of New Zealand and Australia, he scored 201 goals in 43 matches (Team score 584)

In the 1936 Olympics At Berlin, India

faced a robust and dogged defence from Germany in the Finals. In fact, one brutal attack on Dhyan Singh resulted in his losing a tooth. Surprisingly he returned after first-aid and scored 6 goals in a row to defeat Germany 8-1. India Won the GOLD again!!!

In the 1936 World Tour, 'D' scored 59 goals (Team score 175) In the East African Tour of 1947-48, 'D' scored 61 goals in 22 matches 'D' mesmerized millions. He became a house-hold name in all hockey-playing nations and was admired and feared by his opponents. After establishing an unparalleled record in national and international events 'D' retired from international matches from early 1948, well before the 1948 Olympics at London.

After personally witnessing the superb performance from 'D' at Adelaide, in 1935, the legendary Cricketer Don Bradman commented "YOU SCORE GOALS LIKE RUNS IN CRICKET"!

After the first match at Berlin Olympics, the German news papers displayed head lines as "THE OLYMPIC COMPLEX NOW. HAS A MAGIC SHOW TOO!" and "VISIT THE HOCKEY STADIUM TO WATCH INDIAN MAGICIAN DHYANCHAND IN ACTION"

After every match played by India, hundreds of spectators would troop down to the players' enclosure and touch Dhyanchand's stick, to see what trick it was, that kept the ball glued to his stick as he

dribbled his way all over the field.

One European player broke 'D's stick to search for a magnet inside! With the new stick also 'D' displayed his usual scintillating game! The great Pakistani player, Dara, praised him as "THE ONE WHO EMPLOYED MINIMUM OF PERSPIRATION AND MAXIMUM OF INSPIRATION". In Holland and Germany, his name appears among "THE GREATEST OF THE GREATS". In Vienna his statue was erected with "FOUR HANDS, WITH A STICK IN EACH" symbolising his total control of the game.

Dhyan Singh's brother Roop Singh (also an Olympian) recalled that at a match in Munich, after a particularly heavy lunch, Indian team missed every chance to score a goal. In a flash, Dhyan Singh took over the situation and without giving a pass to any of his colleagues, SCORED 6 GOALS, ALL BY HIMSELF!!

As the legend goes, after the Final in Berlin Olympics (1936), Adolf Hitler invited the victorious Indian Hockey team for a dinner, where he offered to bestow the title of FIELD MARSHAL on Maj. DHYANCHAND, if he migrated to Germany. Maj. 'D' politely declined the offer.

Subsequently, Germans requested him to coach their team offering a fat remuneration. He politely declined that offer also, though he was poor! Years later, when a reputed journalist asked him for the reason, his answer was:

"IF I COACH THEM AND THEN THEY BEAT US, WHERE WILL I HIDE MY FACE?" His patriotism made him sacrifice

his own personal gain!

While inviting India for the East African Tour of 1947-48, the host nations insisted "NO DHYANCHAND, NO TEAM PLEASE".

Stickler to Human Values:

'D' was appointed as captain of the Olympic Hockey Team only in 1936. When he was not given that honour earlier, for 1928 and 1932 Olympics, inspite of his reputation for excellent performance, he was not dejected. He took things in his stride which motivated him to play still better. He never made a negative comment against any player, selector or administrator.

When his brother Roopsingh hit a spectator with the ball, instead of shooting it into the goal, 'D' reprimanded him humorously. "They do not come here to get hit"!

National Recognition:

The Life-time awards in Sports Viz. "ARJUNA" and "DRONACHARYA" are being given on Dhyanchand's Birthday, 29 Aug, as a recognition of his contribution to Sports. IOA named him "THE PLAYER OF THE CENTURY". Government of India had awarded PADMA BHUSHAN to him in 1956. A Postage Stamp was released on 3 Dec 1980, a year after his death. Sports Authority of India(SAI) erected his statue in 1995.

Dhyanchand's Birth Centenary Celebrations were held at Jhansi during 14-29 August 2005 and tributes were paid by the whole nation.

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POEMS FROM 'VEMANA SATHAKAM'

Dr. C. Jacob

(A translation from Telugu)

The son who is unkind towards his parents old,
What does it matter whether he is born or dead
Do not termites too come into being and die cold?
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

Enough is a spoonful of milk of a gentle cow,
What use is there of a donkey's milk though drumful?
Enough is a morsel of food if served with love.
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

A dog that's lean and much like a skeleton looks
May bite and tease even a lion worn out by age,
senseless it is to fight when strength is lost and humbled,
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

The mean-minded man boasts of himself very much,
But soft and pleasant always a virtuous man speaks.
Does ever gold make as much sound as brass on touch?
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

Countless in number are men who pick holes in others
A guiltless man is hardly found in the entire world,
Forget men their own faults while finding fault with others;
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

Becomes the voice melodious as one goes on singing
The bitter neem tastes sweet when eaten on and on.
By effort is possible this, that and everything
The lover of the universe, O, Vema, listen.

*

TIME

Dr. K. Rajamouly

How you stepped into the world is strange
Your endless flow is bound up in mystery
Your galloping speed for incessant change
Left imprints in ever living history.

The milestones mark your age on the milky way
It's a race on wheels at a high pace
A wayfarer's journey without stay,
Yet, no trace of weariness on your face.

You manifest eroding powers in all circles
Even pliant limbs and sharp mind grow decrepit
The petal-soft countenance carves wrinkles
The sculpture in a quake breaks into many a bit.

You resemble a river in its ceaseless glide
Your resolve is like the planet's orbit
You look like an eternal traveller in his ride,
And travel like the flash of light brightly lit.

Five senses, in strict governance of the mind,
Fail to unravel and charter your powerful role
Mysterious are your ways to human kind
Everything manifests under your iron control.

*

READERS' MAIL

"I have enjoyed going through the current issue. I am glad that while being secular (in the Indian sense) in presenting points of view, TRIVENI has not abandoned the core values of Hindu dharma recognised by the rest of the world as constituting the Indian ethos. While presenting the multi-faceted Indian culture to the International readership, the journal continues to stress the eternal significance of the upholders of the Sanatana Dharma like Swami Ranganathananda. Even in multi-cultural societies across the continents there should be some basic cementing factors for survival of mankind."

- Prof. D. Ramakrishna (Australia)

"I am deeply influenced by your TRIPLE STREAM in every issue of TRIVENI. It is a highlight indeed. You are the right person to be the Chief Editor to revive the historical glory of TRIVENI. In the last issue, Dr Achyuta Rao's article on the concept of time is also very interesting. I am lucky to have TRIVENI Volumes 1 and 2 on the internet for free reading. I shall have a chance of reading articles written by Dr S. Radhakrishnan and other great writers of TRIVENI on the internet since I have systems at home."

- Dr. K. Rajamouly, Hanamkonda.

"I eagerly wait every issue which is a discovery every time. Indeed TRIVENI is a comprehensive journal rich in works relating

to History, Philosophy, Art, Culture and of course, Literature. Congratulations. It is an honour to be published in TRIVENI."

- Pronab kumar Majumder, Kolkata.

"I wish to congratulate you for contributing a brilliant article, as Editor, to TRIVENI. A masterpiece indeed!

- Dr. C. Jacob, Narasapur.

"Editorial 'Mass Media' gives valuable message to the present society depicting the adverse we find and from this, every one wants to come out with our hoary cultural heritage. I must congratulate you Sir, for very important message to all."

-Prof S. Gangappa, Guntur.

"The editorial (Apr-June 05), on the role of doubt in the progress of science and technology is noteworthy. These days, when young men under the influence of misleading ideals blow themselves up to wreak havoc in the streets of London, this editorial on the necessity of doubting is timely.

-I. A. Pani, Nellore.

"I am charmed to go through your editorial, a tirade against the business of heinous nature with sex objects, bringing our society's moral and cultural breakdown. Thanks for timely protest."

-Manas Bakshi, Bhadrakali (W. Bengal)

"This journal par excellence reiterates its sterling quality. 'Trickles of wisdom' is a treat for the lovers of Sataka Sahityam. Dr. R. R. Menon throws a new light on shadows. All the articles are impressive."

-V. Lalitha Kumari, Guntur.

"Your editorial about the role of mass media echoes the feelings of millions of anxious and worried parents who find it impossible to prevent youngsters from watching the indecent and violence ridden TV shows and serials invading their homes, day and night. Instead of using the powerful media to provide wholesome entertainment and valuable knowledge and information and enable the viewers to cultivate a good taste. The greedy and unscrupulous media barons produce films that cater to the baser instincts."

-M. G. Narasimha Murthy, Hyderabad.

"Your Requiem for Cultural values is timely one. It was necessary that some right voice should be raised against the trend and corrective measures should be taken to save a generation from degeneration."

- Pronab kumar Majumder, Kolkata

"My favourite TRIPLE STREAM is as usual a masterpiece. I wish you may come out with TRIPLE STREAM publication in one single book so that it can be preserved for future generations. I would give full marks to the articles contributed by Satyasree, Dr V.

Koteswara Rao, M. Ramakrishnayya, G. Somaseshu, D. V. Sahani and R. R. Menon."

- P. V. Laxmi Prasad, Peddapalli

"Besides poems, I particularly liked and enjoyed reading your Triple Stream, A. V. Appa Rao's Sri Arthur Cotton, I. Satyasree's 'Child-brides in R. K. Narayanan's fiction', 'The Serpent & Queen' by I. K. Sharma, and B. S. Murthy's article 'Love and Death' in Tolstoy's War and Peace. The readers are especially grateful to you for such a fine selection of articles and poems."

**- Dr. D. C. Chembial, Maranda.
(Himachal Pradesh)**

"In your editorial you have exposed the hollowness of the media's claim of the "investigative journalism". Instead of becoming the guardian of public morality and public interests the media has become a public enemy. A powerful instrument is being misused for wrong ends."

- Dr. G. Lakshmipathi, Hyderabad.

Reader's Mail letters should be concise, not exceeding 10 to 15 lines to avoid the use of the editor's pruning knife.

As our space is limited and the letters are many, we wish to accomodate as many letters as possible.

-Editor

WHO'S WHO

G. Sankara Bhanu	Writer, Poet, Kakinada.
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